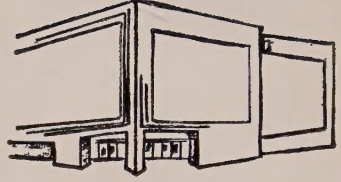
The Eyrie

and other Southern Stories

By

Bettie Freshwater Pool



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THEODOSIA BURR.

(*The Nag's Head Portrait*)

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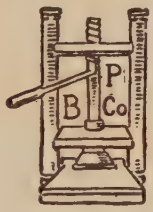

Broadway Publishing
Company, New York

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To the
Memory of My Brother,
The Late Hon. Walter F. Pool,
This Book is
Most Lovingly Dedicated
by
THE AUTHOR.

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I.

"THE EYRIE."

When I bought the Shirley farm I carried my bride to the Eyrie, the old-fashioned irregular mansion on Pasquotank river, that years ago had been the home of the Shirleys.

This old place has a romantic charm for me, so remote it is from the noise and strife of the busy world; so restful it looks, with its background of stately pines, and its elm-shaded lawn dotted with buttercups, daisies and white clover.

That beautiful sheet of water, Pasquotank river, flows not a hundred yards from our door. In sunshine and in storm it is a delight to watch the white-winged ships sail by on their way to the harbor a few miles distant, to listen to the murmur of the rippling water, and see great flocks of birds silhouetted against the deep blue of the sky.

This picturesque grove of stately old elms, pines and sycamores, festooned with graceful garlands of gray moss, and odorous with the scent of jasmine, wild honey-suckle and eglantine, is a place to see visions and dream dreams.

I spend many an idle hour seated on the gnarled roots of a huge oak tree which grows near the edge of the water, with the woman I love by my side, drinking in all the beauty and charm of this restful, picturesque spot.

Sometimes Uncle Pete, an aged negro, once a devoted slave of the Shirleys, beguiles the time with quaint stories of those halcyon days "befo' de war." Those days of romance and chivalry, with their somber setting of storm and blood-shed and tears, stand out in bold relief on the canvas of Uncle Pete's memory: and when in a reminiscent mood he likes nothing better than to regale an appreciative listener with legend and story from the vast store of his treasured collection.

Let me give in his own words the story of the Shirleys; should I substitute my own language in place of his quaint dialect, the story, I am sure, would lose half its interest.

"You ax me huccum dis place call de Eyrie. De place tuck its name frum er big eagle's nes' whut's been in dat pine thicket yonder better'n er hundred years. Dar dem bu'ds lays der eggs an' hatches der young year a'ter year; an' you better not pester um 'dout you want ter git yo' eyes to' out wid dem sharp claws. 'Bout ten years ago dem eagles tuck er notion ter mo' dat nes' ter ernudder tree close by. Dat wery nex' day dar come up er terrible thunderstorm, an' de lightnin' strück dat tree whar de eagle's nes' been mo'd from, an' bu'nt it smack ter de groun'. Eagles got a heap mo' sense'n folks. Dey know jis' when dat storm comin' up, dat's huccum dey mo' dat nes' jis' in de nick er time.

"Marse Joe Shirley had dat house built, an' dar he lib twell he die; den de place wuz sole an' strangers been libin' dar eber sense. My little ole hut standin' ober yonder yit. I hopes de Lord

guine let me lib dar twell He calls me away frum dis heer worl' ter jine ole Marster an' de chillun up dar in de New Jerusalem. I wish you could er seen dis place 'fo' de war. Ober yonder ter de lef' wuz de quarter' whar all de black folks stay; piles an' piles er little white-washed houses jist ez neat ez er pin. De Obeseer an' his wife lib in er bigger house beyant de thicket; an' dar ter de right wuz de big barn, an' de stables chock full er horses an' mules.

"De Shirleys wuz some er de quality. Marse Joe wuz 'mos' rich ez er king. He don't mess his time wid no po' white trash, I kin tell you dat. 'Pear lack he jis' ez proud ez he *kin* be 'fo' Marse Tom wuz born: but a'ter dat he so sot up he can't hardly walk, sho' 'nuff. He so happy kaze he got er son ter bear 'is name, an' heir all dat property.

"An' when Miss Nellie come erlong, he say he got de two beautifules' chillun in de whole kentry, dat's sartin. Dey bof jis' lack dey Ma, wid dem yaller curls an' white skin.

"Lord! how dem chillun did lub one nurr. Whene'er you see Marse Tom dar you see Miss Nellie, too. She foller him in de woods ter look fer beech-nuts an' chinkepins: she go out in de snow wid 'im ter set traps fer de snow-bu'ds; she kin climb trees 'mos' good ez he kin, an' ride hors'-back 'dout no saddle, too. Wonder she ain't break 'er neck long ergo, she so wentur'some.

"When dey git big ernuf ter go ter school, one day Marse Tom git ter fight wid er boy 'mos' big ez two er him. Dat boy had 'im down, beatin' 'im, when up jumps Miss Nellie an' grabs er big light-

'ood knot, an' starts fer to bu'st dat boy's head open wid it. Dat boy name Jack Gray. When he see Miss Nellie comin' wid dat light-'ood knot he jumps up an' run; den he laff an' tell er he ain't guine beat dat little brurr er hern no mo'. Miss Nellie tell 'im he better not, do she guine kill 'im sho' 'nuff.

"Dem chillun git mo' an' mo' wrapt up in one nurr ez dey grow older, in 'tickler a'ter ole Mistis ceasted. Dey jis' lack twins.

"When Marse Tom went ter Chapel Hill ter College, Miss Nellie 'mos' cry 'er eyes out. She so lonesome I feared she guine pine erway an' die. Dat Jack Gray alus hangin' 'roun' her, say he guine teck Marse Tom's place while he gone. She say *nobody* can't take Marse Tom's place. Dat Jack had 'is eye sot on Miss Nellie eber sence dat day she guine knock 'is brains out wid dat light-'ood knot, when dey wuz chilluns.

"Marse Joe 'gun ter see whut dat chap up ter, presney. He tell Miss Nellie she got ter put er stop ter 'is comin' dar, 'dout he guine to it hisse'f. Miss Nellie jis' hilt her head up an' ain't say whut she guine do. Ole Marster he ain't say no mo' right erway: he jis' watchin'. When he see dat feller ain't stop comin' he git ez mad ez thunder. Den one day he had it out wid Jack Gray, an' ferbid 'im ter step 'is foot in dat house ergin. Jack say he lub Miss Nellie an' Miss Nellie lub him, an' he say he made up 'is mind he guine mar'y 'er some day. He tell Marse Joe he needn't hole his head so high jis' 'cause he's rich, dat he jis' ez good ez he is, ef he ain't got ez much money. He talk so sa'sy dat Marse Joe jis' slam de doo'

in 'is face an' don't say no mo'. Den he an' Miss Nellie has it out. He tell her dat ef dat common-no'count feller eber steps his foot in his house ergin, he guine shoot him down lack er dog.

"Den Miss Nellie write Jack Gray er letter an' tell 'im whut her Pa say, an' beg 'im not ter come nigh her no mo'. Den she walk de floo' er her room an' cry all night, Dinah say, an' 'clar' her heart done broke.

"Not long a'ter dat Marse Tom come home from college, den Miss Nellie 'peared ter be happy fer er while. She proud er Marse Tom now sho' 'nuff, kaze he done graderwated an' got fust on all his studies. Ole Marster's prouder 'n eber now, kaze he got sich er smart son. He hole 'is head high now sho' 'nuff. Lord! ef we didn't ha' good times dat summer, I'll hush! Sich er dancin' an' feastin', sich piles er company you neber did see! De sun wuz shinin' den sho' 'nuff, we wa'n't studyin' 'bout no time when de shaders guine fall, an' de light an' de joy done gone clean erway. Dat time wuz er comin' do, fast ernuff.

"De war cloud getherin' right den, an' hit guine break right ober our heads 'fo' we know it. Presney down hit come wid er smash, an' Marse Tom done gone ter Ro'noke Islan' ter fight de Yankees. De whole kentry wuz swarmin' wid Yankees an' bufferlo's an' g'rillers. Yo' life wa'n't wurth nuffin' dem days.

"But I ain't guine talk erbout de war,—you knows all erbout dat,—I guine tell you 'bout Miss Nellie an' Jack Gray, an' de quiltin' party.

"Dat Jack he ain't come nigh Marse Joe no mo', but he meet Miss Nellie at all de parties, an'

she 'low 'im ter set by 'er an' talk ter 'er, all he please; but ole Marster don't know nuthin' 'bout dat.

"In dem days de ladies gin big quiltin' parties, an' a'ter de quiltin' wuz done come de supper an' de fiddlin' an' de dancin'. I knows you's heered erbout all dat. Ole Miss Commander whut libbed down on Little Riber wuz gittin' up one er dem big quiltin' parties; an' Miss Nellie an' 'er young lady frum town—name Miss Fannie Black—whar wuz wisitin' 'er wuz 'wited. Incose I had ter take um ter de party in de big kerridge, in style.

"Dar wuz er big crowd dar dat night, an' things wuz lively, I tell you. But low an' behole! 'Long 'bout ten o'clock dat Jack Gray rid up wid Mr. Harris, whut's er magistrate, an' 'fo' anybody kin say Jack Robinson, dar be er weddin' right dar. Dat rascal, Jack Gray, done 'swade Miss Nellie ter mar'y him den an' dar, an' he done gone an' fotch dat magistrate 'fo' anybody but Miss Nellie 'specion whut he up ter.

"A'ter de marriage wuz ober she come in de kitchen lookin' puty ez er picture. She mick er fine bow ter me, an' say (puttin' her han' on Jack Gray's arm):

"'Uncle Pete, 'low me ter 'duce you ter my husban', Mr. Jack Gray. I shill not trouble you ter tak' me home. My husband will tak' me ter his home at de Cedars, whar' we shill be glad ter hab you come ter see us when you will.'

"I ain't say *nuttin'*. I jis' sot dar so skeered I 'mos' dead, my jaw done drap; kaze I speck Marse Joe guine kill me good fashion when I tell him de news. I shan't neber fergit dat night! Sich er

time as we had when I gits home, an' brings dem tidin's! Marse Joe jis' walks de floo' all night 'long, he ain't sleep one wink, an' I ain't nuther. But he ain't kill me, he so mad wid dat Jack Gray an' Miss Nellie he ain't studyin' 'bout me.

"Dat night Marse Joe writ ter Miss Nellie, an' tell 'er his doo' done shet on her frum dat time fo'th, dat she ain't no da'ter er hisn no longer. Den he write ter Marse Tom, an' tell him whut his sister done.

"Poor ole Marster! his heart 'mos' broke 'bout Miss Nellie, but he won't 'low nobody ter call her name no mo'.

"Not many weeks a'ter dat de big boat whar dey call de "Spauldin'" come up frum Ro'noke Islan' an' fotch de Southern pris'ners. Pore Marse Tom got wounded in de lef' shoulder, an' had ter stey home er long time, an' be nursed twell he git well. Ole Marster so glad ter ha' his boy home ergin' dat he che'rs right up an' am ez lively ez er cricket.

"But I see Marse Tom is pinin' fer his sister. When he git by hisse'f he look so lonesome an' sad, I feels er lump rise in my th'ot: kaze I pinin' fer Miss Nellie, too. I sholy wuz lonesome, dat's de trufe; kaze she de light er de house.

"I know Marse Tom go ter see Miss Nellie sometimes, but ole Marster don't know nuttin' 'bout it. Marse Tom ain't guine gi' up dat sweet sister er hisn ter please nobody. Dat he ain't. But Lord a mussy! we all git stirred up sho' 'nuff, when de news come dat Jack Gray done gone an' jine de bufferloes. Yes, sar! he jis' wheel right eroun' an' he'p de Yankees ter fight his own folks.

"Marse Joe, he cut up lack thunder when he heer dat; but Marse Tom ain't say nuttin', he jis' tu'n white in de face an' shet 'is mouf tight, an' go down an' walk all by hisse'f on de riber sho' dar. He surtney do look lonesome now, dat's de trufe!

"De weeks an' de munts roll erway, an' de whole kentry tu'nd upside down, wid de Yankees, de bufferloes an' de g'rillers, jis' er swarmin', all o' de whole creation.

"One night dat summer I settin' on my doo'-step all by myse'f, kaze Marse Tom rid ter Nixonton dat mornin' an' ain't come back, an' I waitin' fer 'im. De night wuz dark ez pitch; I couldn't eben see de win'mills cross de riber on de Camden side.

"I sat dar watchin' ole Hogan's light rise up slow outen de water. I 'spec you heern 'bout dat light. Dat ole Hogan out fishin' on dark nights. He wuz er powerful mean nigger, he wuz. He busy all de week an' stays out dar on de riber in his little rowboat an' fishes all day long erry Sundays. One dark night ole Hogan out dar ha'in' er big time fishin', when er storm come up an' capsize dat boat, an' dat nigger fall out an' git drownded. He dead sho'; but he ain't git no res', jis' de same. God A'mighty guine make 'im stay out dar on dat riber an' fish all night in de dark, ter punish 'im fer fishin' so much on Sundays. He guine punish ole Teach, too, whut dey call ole Blackbeard, 'sides sendin' 'im ter de deble. *He* ain't res' none in *his* grave nuther. Many er time me an' heap mo' folks sees er sperit ship sailin' up an' down, up an' down, out yonder in de

riber. Ain't no boat on de yeth kin obertake *dat* ship. Sailors, an' folks on sho' too, sees Teaches' light mighty often, an' dey sees dat shader ship plain ez daylight.

"Cap'n Meynard done had Teaches' head chopped off long ergo; but he has ter come back an' sail dat boat, head er no head.

"Fust thing he done a'ter 'is head wuz cut off wuz ter swim 'roun' de boat whar kotch 'im three times. He jis' showin' folks whut he kin do 'dout no head, er nuttin'.

"When dat ole pirate uster git dat long hair, an' dat long black beard er hisn plaited an' stuck full er lit candles, an' 'gin ter chaw glass twell de blood trickle down his chin, an' when he gits ter bu'nin' sulphur an' brimstone, an' er-wavin' dat s'od o' his head, an' er-cussin' an' cuttin' up, folks nigh' 'bout b'le'e he de ole deble hisse'f.

"I sutney does wish I had some er dat money he got bu'ied every which erway 'roun' heer, deble er no deble. I feard ter go look fer it do, kaze he alus cut off de head er one er his men an' bury wid ery pot er money, ter 'tect it. Ef you dig fer dat money, time yo' spade strike de iron pot whar hol's it, dat pot done sunk smack ter de middle er de yerth, an' 'fo' you knows it, er gre't, big mill-stone 'gins ter spin 'roun' right ober yo' head, an' yo' 'speck erry minute hit guine drap an' squush yo' brains out. An' 'fo' you kin run fer yo' life, dat man whar had his head cut off, done clim' ter de top er dat tree, an' dar he sets watchin' you wid two gre't, big red eyes, jis' lack balls er far'.

"Nobody needn't try ter steal none er ole

Teaches' money, I tell you dat. He got some hid in dat woods ober yonder, an' Buzzard's Islan' jis' chock full er date gole.

"Down yonder on Little Flatty Creek is whar he had his headquarters. Dar he keep pasel er dem goods he stole. I'm *hern* some er dem folks whut libed on Little Flatty Creek wuz in league wid him in his divilment. Sometimes he'd come wid er whole troop er his debles ter some er de towns an' march th'oo, cuttin' up lack he clean crazy. He march his men right in de folks' houses an' teck jis' whut he please, 'dout axin' nobody no odds, an' dey skeered ter 'zist 'im, kaze ef dey do he chop der head right off. He ain't ax no odds to rush right in an' grab er man's wife er da'ter an' run off wid 'er, an' when he gits tar'd er her he jis' chop off 'er head an' fling 'er o'board. But I better stop talkin' 'bout 'im dis fashion. Fust thing I knows he'll grab me an' cut off *my* head an' fling me in dat riber.

"But dat night I tellin' you 'bout, when I settin' dar watchin' ole Teaches' light, I heers Marse Tom come gallopin' up on hossback. He see me settin' in de light er de doo', an' drive up dar an' say, 'Pete, git on dis hors' quick, an' go ter Nellie's an' tell her dat I say ter meet me at de fork er de road jis' in front er her house at ten erclock ter-morrer mornin'. Tell her not ter fail ter do dat. Do you understan'?'

"I jumps on dat hoss an' erway I goes. I git ter Miss Nellie's all right an' 'livers dat message, an' starts home ergin 'bout twelve er'clock.

"I rid erlong not thinkin' 'bout bein' skeered twell I gits in front er de ole Ashley house dar

ter De Elums. 'Bout dat time my hoss shied so sudent I jam pitched head ober heels; an' I heer supin' guine whiz! whiz! whiz! lack er big wheel turnin' 'roun'. Den my hair riz on my head sho' 'nuff; kase I knowed pintidly dat de sperit er ole Miss Ashley. She uster be er mighty spinner, an' when you heers dat wheel guine whiz! whiz! whiz! lack dat, you knows dat's her sperit settin' dar spinnin' fer dear life. Sometimes she come back in de shape uf er gre't, big ball er far', 'bout de size uv er cart-wheel, an' she roll down dat road jist er scatterin' sparks ez she goes.

"I 'mos' sho' I guine see dat ball er far' dat night when I heered dat wheel tu'nin' roun', an' ef I didn't meck dat hoss skoot I'll hush!

"Ole Mr. Ashley had dat house built wid er chimbly in the middle an' er outside doo' in erry room, so he kin run in an' out when dat 'oman tuck a'ter 'im wid dat gre't, big pistol whar she call her Sherlock; kaze he know she'd shoot 'im in er minute. Dat po' man sholy did ha' er hard time. Sometimes when things git too hot fer 'im dar home he'd go off an' stay three er fo' days. When he come back he'd open de front doo' an' fling in his hat. Ef dat 'oman hang dat hat on de peg whar it 'longs, he knows he kin go in an' she ain't guine beat 'im; but ef she flings dat hat out-doo's he jis' puts hit back on his head an' off he walks ergin ter stay twell she git pleased.

"No wonder when she comes back she brings some er de deble's far' wid her. I b'le'e plenty folks on dis heer yerth is mighty nigh kin ter de deble, dat I does. I knows dem g'rillers wuz. fer er fac'. Deble ain't done many deeds no blacker 'n some

dey done. I guine tell ye 'bout de 'mos' outlandish thing whut happen endurin' de war: Marse Tom done been ter see Miss Nellie, an' tell her ter warn her husban' ter be on de sharp lookout; dat de kentry 'roun' heer swarmin' wid dem g'rillers, an' dey hid in erry woods an' thicket watchin' fer de bufferloes an' guine shoot um on de sly. God A'mighty! ef dat Jack Gray had er listened ter dat warnin' he might er been libin' ter dis day! But he dat wentur'some, he ain't skeered er g'rillers er nobody else, dat's de trufe.

"'Twa'n't many weeks a'ter dat 'fo' he tuck Miss Nellie ter see his cousin, whut libed t'other side er Newbergun Creek. Dey rid in er open buggy an' started home 'bout four o'clock in de ebenin'. When dey git dar ter de Trunk Bridges at Newbergun Creek, er whole band er g'rillers sprung out an' 'fo' Jack Gray kin raise his han' er open his mouf, dey done en riddled 'im wid bullets. One er dem bullets went th'oo Miss Nellie's hat, an' ernudder one grazed 'er arm. De hoss tuck fright an' run erway, he skeered 'mos' ter def. When Miss Nellie see her husban' drap de reins an' fall back stiff, she jis' flung 'er arms 'roun' his neck, an' hilt 'im in de buggy. De blood gushed frum all dem wounds an' soaked her close an' stained her hands an' face, an' trickled down in er big red puddle in de foot er de buggy. Dat hoss had 'longed ter Miss Nellie since she wuz er little gal. He skeered 'mos' outen his senses, but he meek er 'B' line fer de Eyrie, an' ain't stop twell he git back ter his ole home.

"When he git dar ter de big gate he stop so sudent dat he fling Miss Nellie an' Marse Jack out

on de ditch bank, den he whicker an' paw de groun'. Marse Tom, settin' readin' on de front po'ch, an' I workin' in de flower garden close by. We bofe seed dat hoss er-flyin' down de road at de same time. Marse Tom flung down dat book an' run lack er deer to'ds de big gate what opened in de main road, an' I followed close at his heels. He beat me runnin', an' when I git dar he done had Miss Nellie in his arms er-wipin' de blood frum 'er face wid 'is handkercher. His face 'mos' white ez er sheet, an' all he say is: 'Pete, tell father, an' go fer er doctor, quick, quick!' He carri'd Miss Nellie in 'is arms lack er baby, ter de bed in her ole room whut nobody ain't sleep in sense she lef'. She done faint clean erway an' lay dar lack she stone dead. Dinah an' Mollie flyin' eroun' dar gettin' water an' towels, an' Marse Tom bathin' her hands an' face, when ole Marster come ter de bed an' look at her. He 'gun ter trimble frum head ter foot an' drapt inter er cheer an' kivered 'is face wid 'is han's. Den I flies out dat house, ketches er hoss, an' rides bare-back fer Dr. Grimes, whar lib 'bout two mile frum de Eyrie.

"Ez good luck would have it I fines 'im home, an' back we flies lack de win'. When we gits dar out jumps Dr. Grimes, an' makes his way th'oo er whole pasel er darkies an' white folks gethered roun' Marse Jack. De docter ben's ober dat po' man, an' puts his han' on his ris', den on his heart, den he gits up an' say mighty solum: 'I can't do no good heer. He's stone dead. I'll go in an' see whut kin be done fer de lady.' An' off he starts fer de house. I follers 'im inter Miss Nellie's room. She done come to an' open her eyes

'bout dis time. De docter teck 'er han' an' ax mighty sof': 'Is you hurt?' She say, 'No, no, not much; but tell me erbout Jack. Is he dead?'

"De doctor tu'n erway his face, an' say, 'We'll talk erbout him in er minute, you jist drink dis medicine fer me, quick, an' hit well meck you feel better.' She look like she 'mos' addled, but she mine de doctor an' drink de medicine.

"Den she close her eyes an' say, 'You might jist ez well tell me he is dead! dead! I know! I know!'

"De doctor bow his head, an' say, 'Yes, my dear, he is dead; but you mus' be brave fer yo' brother's sake!' Everybody know how good Miss Nellie lub Marse Tom. He settin' on de side er de bed right den holdin' her han'. She fling her arms roun' his neck an' sob an' cry lack her heart clean broke. I follers de doctor outen de room, an' when I gits downstairs dey had done washed an' dressed Marse Jack an' laid 'im out in de parlor. His pore old Mammy standin' o' 'im cryin' an' sobbin', an' ole Marster walkin" in an' out de room givin' orders; he done come to, now he know Miss Nellie ain't dead.

"Dat po' chile gone ter sleep now, an' Marse Tom settin' by her keepin' watch. 'Long 'bout ten o'clock dat night, when errything still ez er mouse, sich er scream ez I neber shill fergit rung th'oo dat house. Den ernudder an' ernudder untwell my hair riz on my head. Den I heers Miss Nellie's woice cryin' out, 'Oh, look! Look! Look! Oh, see de blood! Dar's er bullet in his heart an' in his brain! he bleeds! he dies! see de blood!' Den she swoon erway, cryin' all dat night; when she come to, she

jis' say, 'Oh, blood! blood! blood!' Den she ring 'er han's an' scream ergin, an' ain't know nutten else. She ain't eben know when we car'y Marse Jack erway ter bury him, she gone clean 'stracted. Pore Miss Nellie! Fer days an' weeks she linger dar wid de brain feber, Marse Tom an' her Pa watchin' by her night an' day. She ain't neber speak er wud ter ole Marster er nobody, she clean gone outen her head an' ain't talk 'bout nuthen but de g'rillers an' blood. But jis' 'fo' she dies, she open her eyes an' look up in Marse Tom's face, an' say wid er smile:

"'Tom, take me in yo' boat on de riber; de water am smoove, de win' blows so fresh, an' de water-lilies gleam so white. Take me, please, Tom, I so tired, I wants ter res'.'

"Marse Tom ben' his head an' kiss her on de cheek, den she shet her eyes, an' ain't neber open um in dis worl' no mo'.

"I neber shill fergit dem sad an' lonesome days whut follered de death er Miss Nellie. Hit break my heart ter see pore Marse Tom. Dar ain't no music fer him no mo' in de song er birds, an' no joy in de sunshine, kaze de music an' de sunshine er his young life am gone fereber.

"He tell ole Marster he *cannot* stay at de ole home no longer; he mus' drown his trouble in the roar er de cannon, in de 'citement an' thunder ub de war. So erway he goes ter jine de Confederate regiment whar campin' at Woodville, den erway ter de war once mo'.

"Den I tries ter cheer up ole Marster, an' he 'peared ter keep up his sperits mighty good, twell we heerd dat Richmon' had fell. He know Marse

Tom dar in de thick er de fight, an' he 'mos' grebe ter def. When de news come dat Marse Tom wuz killed, de pore ole man jis' reeled an' fell. I sartin he clean dead; but presney he come to an' look eroun' an' say? 'All gone! all gone! My children, my kentry, everything!'

"I say, wid de tears tricklin' down my face, 'Dat's so, Marster, but you got pore, ole, no-'count Pete, whut lubs you, an' I don't keer ef he am bound er free, he guine stan' by you twell yo' head er hisn am laid ter res' under de sod.' He tuck my hand in hisn, an' say,

"'Good, faithful Pete! I thanks you, an' lubs you, but my ole heart am broke.'

"I see he spoke de trufe. But he say he can't die twell Marse Tom is brung home, an' burried by de side er Miss Nellie.

"So jist ez soon ez we kin we goes ter Richmon,' an' er frien' er Marse Tom's whut fought in dat las' battle wid him, an' writ ole Marster how brave he wuz, goes wid us ter Marse Tom's grave. 'Twuz er sad task we had, but we tuck dat coffin, whut hilt all dat wuz lef' er brave Marse Tom back to de Eyrie, an' burried him wid de rest er de Shirleys.

"Not many months a'ter dat we laid Marse Joe by his side. Den de place whar wuz his home, an' whar he 'speck guine ter be de home er his chillun an' grand'chillun, wuz sold, an' fell inter de han's er strangers.

"When I sits dar on my doo'step ub er ebenin', an' on bright moonlight nights, I kin see de toom'-stone whut marks Miss Nellie's grave. It am under de weepin'-willer not fer frum de riber. She

an' Marse Tom sleeps dar side by side. Dar de wild roses an' de jassamine blooms, an' de birds build dey nes' an' dey sing dey glad songs in de springtime.

"Hit's er sweet spot ter rest in when yo' body an' yo' soul am weary; when yo' heart am broke, an' de light er dis worl' am gone out. Yes, sar, hit's er sweet spot ter rest in."

II.

THE NAG'S HEAD PICTURE OF THEODOSIA BURR.

The sand dunes of North Carolina have long been famous as the scene of marine tragedies. The bleaching ribs of some of the stateliest craft that ever plowed the deep bear testimony to the ravages of old ocean. The English merchantman, the Portugese galleon, the Dutch brigantine, the Spanish treasure ship, the French corvette, the Norwegian barque, representatives of every maritime nation on the globe, are scattered over the beach, from Hatteras to Cape Fear, their grisly skeletons protruding from the sands like antediluvian monsters in some geological bed.

This narrow strip of sand, winding like a yellow ribbon between the inland sounds and the sea, presents a curious study to the geologist. For years it has been gradually sinking, and at the same time becoming narrower, until now its average width is not more than a mile; and, the libertine waters of the great sea not seldom rush across the frail barrier to embrace those of the Albemarle.

The slender divide has not always been able to withstand the matchless flood, which has, in times of unusual commotion, literally cut a pathway through the yielding sands.

These form inlets, of which Oregon, Hatteras and New are the most important. Through the first Burnside's fleet of warships defiled on its way to the bombardment of Roanoke Island.

The channels are constantly changing, and skillful pilots are required to guide vessels safely over the bar.

The ornithologist may here find much to interest him, and the conchologist revel in a paradise of shells. But the nautilus, pale and pearly, and the delicate blush of the sea conch, have small influence on the rude nature of the native "banker." Isolated from the world on this barren waste of shifting sand the "banker" of a hundred years ago was almost a barbarian. His savage instincts not only made him consider all flotsam and jetsam his lawful property, but induced him to use every means to lure vessels ashore for purposes of plunder. And when a wreck occurred, the wreckers held high carnival. The sparse population turned out *"en masse,"* and with demoniac yells, murdered without remorse the hapless victims who escaped the raging surf. Nags Head, a favorite summer resort along the coast, was named from a habit the "bankers" had of hobbling a horse, suspending a lantern from its neck, and walking it up and down the beach on stormy nights, impressing the mariner with the belief that a vessel was riding safely at anchor. Through this device many a good ship has gone down and much valuable booty secured to the land pirates.

The "bankers" of to-day are different beings from their ancestors of a century ago. Fellowship with enlightened people has had a humanizing in-

fluence, and they are now good and useful citizens. The North Carolina coast is provided with three first-class lighthouses, Hatteras, Whale's Head, and Body's Island.

Body's Island is no longer an island. Nags Head Inlet which formed its northern boundary, having been completely closed up by the encroaching sands.

The dunes, for the most part barren of vegetation, have in some places a stunted growth of forest trees, and in others large marshes covered with a rank growth of coarse grass, on which herds of wild cattle and "banks ponies" graze.

In the winter of 1812 there drifted ashore at Kitty Hawk, a few miles below Nags Head, a small pilot boat with all sails set and the rudder lashed. There was no sign of violence or bloodshed; the boat was in perfect condition, but entirely deserted. The small table in the cabin had been spread for some repast, which remained undisturbed. There were several handsome silk dresses, a vase of wax flowers with a glass covering, a nautilus shell beautifully carved, and hanging on the wall of the cabin was the portrait of a young and beautiful woman. This picture was an oil painting on polished mahogany, twenty inches in length and enclosed in a frame richly gilded. The face was patrician and refined: the expression of the dark eyes, proud and haughty; the hair dark auburn, curling and abundant. A white bodice cut low in the neck and richly adorned with lace, revealed a glimpse of the drooping shoulders, and the snowy bust, unconfined by corset.

The wreckers who boarded the boat possessed

themselves of everything of value on board. The picture, wax flowers, nautilus shell and silk dresses fell into the possession of an illiterate banker woman, who attached no especial value to them.

This picture, which has since attracted so much attention, hung on the wall of a rude cabin among the North Carolina hills for fifty-seven years. In the year 1869, it fell into the possession of the late Dr. William G. Pool, a prominent North Carolina physician. Dr. Pool was a man of marked individuality. He had the tastes of an antiquarian, was literary, cultured, and noted for his remarkable conversational gifts. While summering at Nags Head, he was called upon to visit professionally the old banker woman referred to above. He was successful in his treatment of the case, and knowing the circumstances of his patient, would accept no payment for his services. In her gratitude for his kindness, the old woman insisted upon his accepting "as a gift," the portrait hanging on the wall of her cabin. When questioned concerning its history, she related the facts above mentioned. This she did with apparent reluctance, possibly suppressing many interesting details that might have thrown more light upon the subject. Her husband had been one of the wreckers who boarded the pilot boat, and the picture and other articles referred to had been his share of the spoils. Her story was, that the wreckers supposed the boat to have been boarded by pirates, and that passengers and crew had been made to "walk the plank." The picture and its strange history became a subject of much interest and conjecture to Dr. Pool. Artists pronounced it a masterpiece,

and the unmistakable portrait of some woman of patrician birth.

Chancing one day to pick up an old magazine in which appeared a picture of Aaron Burr, Dr. Pool was forcibly struck by the strong resemblance between it and the portrait in question. Like a flash it occurred to him that this might be a likeness of Theodosia, the ill-fated daughter of Aaron Burr. Eagerly he compared dates and facts, until he became thoroughly convinced that he had found a clue to that mysterious disappearance, which is one of the most awful tragedies of history. A brief account of this discovery was published in the New York "Sun," and immediately letters innumerable were received by him asking for more particulars.

Photographs of the portrait were sent to the numerous members of the Burr and Edwards families, and almost without exception the likeness was pronounced to be that of Theodosia Burr. Charles Burr Todd, the author, and Mrs. Stella Drake Knappin, descendants respectively of the Burr and Edwards families, visited Dr. Pool's residence on Pasquotank river for the purpose of examining the portrait. They were both convinced that it was a likeness of Theodosia Burr.

The wife of Col. Wheeler of Washington, D. C., who is a daughter of Sully, the famous portrait painter, and is herself an artist, compared a photo of the Nags Head picture with a likeness of Theodosia Burr in her possession. She at once perceived that both features and expression were identical.

There was probably no woman in America at the time of Theodosia Burr's death, more univer-

sally know and admired than she. Her high social rank, her beauty, her genius, her accomplishments, as well as her heroic devotion to her father in the dark days of his disgrace and banishment, had made her a prominent figure and had won for her the admiration of thousands.

When Aaron Burr upon his return from exile sent for his daughter to visit him in New York, she decided to make the voyage by sea. Her health had been almost completely wrecked by grief over her father's disgrace, and the recent death of her only child, young Aaron Burr Alston. It was thought that a sea voyage might prove beneficial. She accordingly set sail from Georgetown, S. C., in the "Patriot," a small pilot boat, December 30th, 1812. Days and weeks passed, but Aaron Burr waited in vain for the arrival of his daughter. Months and years rolled away and still no tidings came. The "Patriot" and all on board had completely vanished from the face of the earth, and the mystery of its disappearance remained unsolved for more than half a century.

Governor Alston did not long survive the loss of his beloved wife, and Aaron Burr, in speaking, years afterwards of his daughter's mysterious fate, said that this event had separated him from the human race.

Let us now compare dates and facts: A pilot boat drifts ashore during the winter of 1812 at Kitty Hawk, a few miles below Nags Head. There are silk dresses in the cabin, and other indications that some lady of wealth and refinement has been on board. There is a portrait on the wall of the cabin that has been pronounced by artists

and members of her family to be a likeness of Theodosia Burr.

The "Patriot" was lost during the winter of 1812. On the voyage from Georgetown, S. C., to New York, it would pass the North Carolina coast. The sea at this time was infested by pirates. A band of these bold buccaneers may have boarded the little vessel and compelled passengers and crew to "walk the plank." Becoming alarmed at the appearance of some Government cruiser, they may, from motives of prudence, have abandoned their prize.

This theory is not mere conjecture. Years ago two criminals executed in Norfolk, Va., are reported as having testified that they had belonged to a piratical crew who boarded the "Patriot," and compelled every soul on board to "walk the plank." The same confession was made years subsequently by a mendicant dying in a Michigan almshouse. This man said he would never forget the beautiful face of Theodosia Burr, as it sank beneath the waves, nor how eloquently she pleaded for her life, promising the pirates pardon and a liberal reward if they would spare her. But they were relentless, and she went to her doom with so dauntless and calm a spirit, that even the most hardened pirates were touched.

I cannot vouch for the truth of these confessions which have appeared from time to time in print, I only introduce them as collateral evidence in support of the banker woman's story. The "Patriot" was supposed to have been wrecked off the coast of Hatteras during a terrific storm which occurred soon after it set sail. This, however, was

mere conjecture which has never been substantiated by the slightest proof.

It is not improbable that the "Patriot" during a night of storm was lured ashore by the decoy light at Nags Head, and that passengers and crew fell into the hands of the land pirates in waiting, who possessed themselves of the boat and everything of value it contained.

This also, of course, is mere conjecture; but the all-important fact remains that a pilot boat went ashore at Kitty Hawk during the winter of 1812, and that in the cabin of this boat was a portrait of Theodosia Burr.

III.

THE SHADOW OF THE PAST.

The sun had set and the shadows of night were beginning to fall.

In the handsome drawing-room of a magnificent brownstone mansion sat a woman of exquisite grace and beauty. All women envied her, all men admired her.

Fortune had lavished upon her its choicest gifts: beauty, talent, wealth, position; and yet there were times when nothing seemed to her of any value, when her life seemed empty and desolate, her heart like lead.

Her husband surrounded her with every luxury that immense wealth could purchase; he gratified her every expressed desire; and yet he seemed to her as cold and incapable of love as the snow-capped summits of the Alps.

Long ago she had been loved, yes, loved with a passionate devotion such as few women possess, and she had not valued it.

It seemed to her now that she never could value anything else.

As she sat by the open window and watched the stars come out one by one in the summer sky, she thought of a summer long ago, and a mist of tears blinded her eyes.

She saw long stretches of yellow sand, and hills gleaming white in the moonlight. She heard the murmur of the sea, the lash of the waves against the shore, that sound which once was music, which now seemed a dirge. She saw herself a young, happy, thoughtless girl, vain of her beauty, proud of her conquests. And always by her side she saw the man she had loved, and who had loved her: the man whose genius had charmed all hearts; whose personal beauty, magnetism, grace, had made him seem to her a king among men. Never would she forget the night, when false to herself and false to him, she had denied the love that even at that moment was consuming her heart, and sent him from her, embittered, hopeless, crushed.

And then came the chime of wedding bells, and she saw herself a bride. She had married a man whose almost fabulous wealth had dazzled her, and blinded her to all sense of right and duty.

The scales had fallen from her eyes too late, and the Dead-Sea fruit had turned to ashes on her lips.

Vain and foolish dream, that there can be any true happiness in a woman's life where love is not.

In the midst of luxury and power she often felt herself more wretched than the beggar who came to her door for alms.

Her heart, her very life was consumed by a vain regret, a passionate remorse.

As she sat in her richly-furnished room, instead of the luxury around her, she saw to-night that little village by the sea, where she spent one sweet summer long ago. Scene after scene rose before

her, until, with a stifled sob, she buried her face in her hands.

Just then she heard the notes of a guitar, and a sweet girlish voice was wafted to her from a balcony near by:

"Could you come back to me, Douglas, Douglas,
In the old likeness that I knew,
I would be so faithful, so loving, Douglas,
Douglas, Douglas, tender and true."

A tremor ran through her frame.

As she listened she saw herself standing by a grave. Autumn winds were sighing; autumn leaves strewed the ground. Deep down under those leaves and those clods lay the form of the man who had loved her, and whose life she had wrecked.

So still! so still! so dark! Shut away forever from the noises of the busy world whose brightness he had loved so well.

As these memories thronged upon her, the tender strains of the music died away.

Suddenly she heard an approaching footstep. She turned and saw her husband standing by her side, and felt thankful that in the semi-darkness he could not see her face.

IV.

JOE PINETOP'S "MARSE JEEMES."

A TRUE CHARACTER SKETCH.

"Bless yo' soul, Mr. Roberson, yo' sholy is kin ter Marse Jeemes. I sees de blemish er him all over you, frum dem two wrinkles in yo' for'ad, an' dat stiff black hair ter dem sleepy gray eyes, what's just ez much lack Marse Jeemeses ez two black-eyed peas. Nobody can't 'spute you's some er our folks. I knowed dat 'reckly I sot meh eyes on ye, 'fo' ye done git dar ter te doo' an' specified who you wuz. Joe Pinetop ain't got no l'arnin', but 'tickler hard ter fool, now, don't you forgit it."

I considered it a doubtful compliment to be told I resembled my maternal uncle, whose portrait, hanging in my mother's bed-chamber, had attracted my childish curiosity twenty years ago. The face, which I could even yet vividly recall, was certainly not that of an Adonis. But there was something peculiar in the expression of the eyes and the shape of the head that had always proved an attraction to me, and piqued my curiosity.

I lost my mother when I was yet in the nursery,

and my father survived her but a few years. I often questioned the latter about my Uncle James Gray, as I sat studying the portrait during many an idle hour, with the eager interest of a boy of ten. My father always assured me that he knew very little about my mother's brother, who lived far away from our Western home, "Away down South in Dixie."

I resolved even then that when I grew to manhood I would visit my mother's old home, and accumulate all the information obtainable concerning my ancestors on that side of the house. And I was especially determined to investigate the history of the original of the attractive portrait. So, after years of waiting, I found myself in the Old North state, as the guest of Cyrus Roberson, my mother's first cousin. I soon succeeded in obtaining many interesting items of family history. Old bibles and other records furnished me with much-desired information: but it was not until I made the acquaintance of Uncle Joe Pinetop, a former slave of Uncle James Gray, that I found the "open sesame" I was seeking.

One delightful afternoon late in October, I had the good fortune to make the acquaintance of Uncle Joe at his own home, a rude cabin of two rooms, set well back from the main road in the midst of a flourishing pine thicket. The old negro sat dozing in his open doorway, when the clicking of the gate-latch made by my entrance aroused him. Never was guest more hospitably received, and after a few preliminaries, I made known my errand.

"So you wants me to 'late ter you all I 'mem-

bers 'bout Marse Jeemes, does you, Mr. Roberson? Well, Marse Jeemes sholy was curious, dat's de trufe! He couldn't walk er blessed step 'dout dat walkin'-stick er hisn: but, bless yo' soul! hit neber t'uched de ground, but jis' stuck out frum under his arm, one half befo' an' t'other half behin', jis' lack he guine punch somebody's eyes out.

"An' curiser'n dat, he couldn't see er wink 'dout dem gole-rim spectacles er hisn, what I don't b'le'e he eber is looked th'oo sence he wuz born. Dey alus sot on de top er dat bal' head er hisn, lack he tryin' ter ha' fo' eyes inste'd er two.

"Dat nigger boy, Jake, whut belongst ter 'im, he wus alus full er his devilment. One day he ups an' hides dem gole-rim spectacles; done stole um offen Marse Jeemes's head, when he wuz 'sleep in de big arm-cheer. Lord! dem eyes w'an't good an' open 'fo' dem spectacles wuz missed, an' Marse Jeemes wuz jam 'stracted. He had every nigger on de place er lokin' an' er s'archin' fer em high an' low, in de house an' out doo's one whole day 'fo' dat poky Jake fotch um back an' slipped um in Marse Jeemes's pocket on de sly. Den dat rascal say, 'Marster, is you s'arched all yo' pockets good? I do b'le'e I see dem spectacles dis precious minute in dat coattail pocket er yorn.' Roun' flops Marse Jeemes, and grabs in dat pocket, an' sho' 'nuff, dar be de spectacles. Den he git so mad he cuss de whole plantation blue—all but dat foxy nigger Jake, what he give er gole dollar, kaze he say dat boy got mo' sense an' wuth mo' 'n de whole bilin's un us put together.

"But what tickled me wuz ter see Marse Jeemes tryin' fer ter read, feelin' on top er 'is head fur

dem spectacles, den cussin' an' flin'in' down book a'ter book an' paper a'ter paper. Not de fust blessed word kin dat man make out twell dem spectacles comes ter light an' is sot in one tickler spot on the top er dat bal' head er hisn. I knowed his eyes wuz good ez er baby's, an' I thought I should bust dat day, when I seed he can't read none an' how 'stracted he wuz 'dout dem spectacles."

Uncle Joe rocked himself back and forth, and laughed until the tears trickled down his withered cheeks at the recollection of this ludicrous scene. As soon as he could control himself he resumed: "Marse Jeemes wuz er riglor sport in his young days. He had de mos' fine clo's an' gin de mos' good dinners you ebber see. He had piles er money, an' more 'n er hundred head er darkies. I tell you, sar, he wuz some er de quality, he wuz! My mouf right nachly waters when I gits ter study-in' 'bout dem wine parties, when de fine silver an' de cut-glass wuz brung out, an' de young gents frum town would come out on hors'back er by the kerriage load, an' eat an' drink an' play cards an' cut up—— Lord! ef dem wa'n't good ole times, I'll hush!

"But de older Marse Jeemes git de curiser he gits, dat's sartin. He did' ha' no use fer women folks nur chillun, 'peared lack he jis' 'spised um a'ter he got ole.

"One day he wuz in er powerful good humor an' I ups an' axes 'im whut's de reason he ain't nebber git mar'ied. He jis' laugh an' say, 'Kase I got too much sense, Joe Pinetop, dat's de reason. Womens is all fools, every last one er um, an' if dar be one thing in dis worl' dat I 'bominates its

er fool,' says he. Den he laugh ergin, an' say:

"'But twice in my life I come mighty nigh bein' er fool myself. Yes, Joe, when I wuz er young chap I got it inter my head, dat I wuz in lub wid er mighty pretty lady: but I can't make up my mind if I guine ax 'er ter be my wife. One day ez I wuz ridin' 'long de road, comin' home, I gits ter studyin' 'bout dat young lady, and tryin' fer ter 'side if I wants her or don't want her. I alus knowed dat hosses got pasel er sense, an' thinks I, ole Nero's got heap mo' sense an' I is, so I'll let him 'side dis matter fer me. So when I gits ter de fork in de road ober yonder, whar one road leads home an' t'other ter my sweetheart's house, I gives ole Nero de reins, an' tells him ter settle dis hur business fer me once an' fer all: dat ef it is best fer me ter marry dis 'oman ter trot smack up ter her doo', an' I would 'lite an' pop the question. But ef dat 'oman guine pull my hair, an' chunk my hat out doo's, an' cut up lack ole Scratch, says I, Nero, ef dat's de way dat 'oman guine do, don't you go nigh her: you jest make er B line fer home; now you heers me! An' bless yo' soul, Joe Pinetop, dat hoss fotch me home; so dat broke up de co'tin'.'

"'Encose dat hoss guine home,' says I, 'whar he know all dat corn an' fodder waitin' fer 'im ter eat. He had nuff sense fer dat sho', don't I calls 'im er tickler blockhead, dat I does.'

"'Now, Joe Pinetop, you jis' hole yo' tounge,' says Marse Jeemes, 'an' I'll tell you erbout my t'other sweetheart, de one whut nigh 'bout kotch me, sho' 'nuff. I had gitten' my head sot on de beautifulest gal in de whole kentry dis time, an'

thinks I, now I's in lub widout no mistake! So eway I rides one cole day in December ter ax 'er ter be my wife. I finds her settin' all by herself, right before' er bright, cracklin' wood far', an' lookin' jest ez fresh an' sweet ez er June rosebud. I sot down close beside 'er an' 'gun ter talk mighty sweet. Bless yo' soul, Joe, I wuz jest on the p'int er poppin' de question, when in blurts dat confounded daddy 'er hern, flops hisse'f down iner cheer an' 'gins ter talk erbout fattenin' hogs on black-eyed peas. I wuz so disgumsted I flung dat little white han' whar wuz restin' in mine eway, an' out I goes, givin' dat doo' er slam-bang a'ter me—mad as thunder. I'll go ter ole Nick,' says I, ' 'fo' I ax any 'oman to be my wife whut ez got sich er fool fer er father ez ter disinterupt er coteship, talkin' 'bout fattenin' hogs on black-eyed peas.

" 'An' now, Joe Pinetop,' says he, 'you kin bet yo' bottom dollar I ain't neber guine make myself er fool 'bout nair nother 'oman under de sun. I done tuck my oath,' says he. An', bless de Lord! Marse Jeemes ain't nebber broke dat oath, nuther. None de gals ain't kotch him. An' I ain't right sho' which one wuz de luckies'—Marse Jeemes er de gals.

"I don't speck you knows, Mr. Roberson, dat Marse Jeemes wuz er sho' 'nuff doctor 'fo' de war. Yes, sar, he git his lisence an' wuz ridin' all o' de kenty to see all de sick folks, in 'tickler de big bugs. He wuz gittin' 'long mighty good, an' makin' piles er money kourin' er whole pasel er sick folks, an' his friends all spresified dat he guine climb ter de top er de ladder an' make er big name.

An' 'fo' de Lord! I b'le'e he'd er done dat thing ef it hadn't been fer dat cussed hoss' er hisn, ole Nero. I'll tell yo' how 't wuz: One night in October, when de moon wuz ez bright ez day, he wuz sont fer, ter wisit er mighty sick man, what libbed down on De Pint, 'bout ten mile eway. Marse Jeemes tuck er notion ter go on hossback, so I saddled ole Nero, an' eway dey goes, ez lively ez er cricket. Dat man wuz powerful sick, an' Marse Jeemes can't start home twell a'ter midnight. Den de moon done gone down, an' der ain't no stars, an' Marse Jeemes wuz 'tickler skerry a'ter dark. He can't see which way he gwine, so he jis' fling de reins ter ole Nero, an' tell 'im ter pick 'is way de best he kin, kaze he feels lack he done got ter de bad place or somewhar wus.

"Presney, ole Nero stop kerplump, an' dat 'peared ter agerwate some dogs whar wuz hidin' somewhar 'roun', an' dey made er outdacious hubbub, barkin' an' er clankin' der chains. Marse Jeemes wuz 'tickler skeered er dogs, an' his hair riz on his head. He 'spected ev'ry blessed minute he guine git tore all ter flinders. He whipped ole Nero an' put spurs ter 'im, but dat outlandish hoss wouldn't budge er peg, he done made up his mind he ain't guine one step fudder.

"Long to'ds day Marse Jeemes 'gun ter git mighty sleepy, an' he skeered he might drap ter sleep an' tumble offen dat hoss an' break 'is neck. So down he gits an' stre'ches hisse'f on er pile er dry lebes in de bottom ub er big ditch, an' purty soon he draps ter sleep. An' dar he sleep smack twell de sun shine in his face an' woke 'im

up. Den up he jumps an' rubs his eyes an' looks eroun'. Bless de Lord! Ef he wa'n't right befo' his own gate, an' dem dogs what jam skeered de life outen 'im wuz his own dogs, ole Nip an' ole Trip.

"Marse Jeemes look at dat house an' dem dogs, an' den he wheel eroun' an' look at dat ditch an' dat bed er lebes. Den he swar dat ev'rybody in de whole kingdom might die an' go ter de debble, he wa'n't *nebber* guine practice medicine no mo'. So dat settled de doctor business.

"You see dat tree yander, Mr. Roberson? Dat wuz Marse Jeemes's parlor, whar he hide when he want ter read an' keep cool in the summertime. He'd climb up dar an' set half er day sometimes, hid 'mongst all dem lebes. When he seed any company comin' whut he wants ter see, down he'd come, lack er eel; but ef he don't want ter see um, he sont Jake ter de gate ter tell de folks dat he gone clean eway, an' no tellin' when he git back.

"Marse Jeemes had a heep er book-l'arnin', but he didn't ha' much sense. He say de sun am cole ez er iceberg, say he know dat kaze de nigher you gits ter it de colder you gits: dat on de tops er de high mountains de snow don't nebber melt.

"Dat sot me to studyin'. Thinks I dat sounds mighty reasonable, but when I thinks erbout how it feels to wuck out in de corn-fiel's in de July sun, an' feel it brilin' down on my head an' jamby cookin' my brains, thinks I, ef dat sun am cole, I don't want ter feel nuffin' what's hot.

"Marse Jeemes wouldn't talk ter nobody 'dout dey sot mighty still, an' paid 'tickler 'tention ter him. Ef dey 'gun ter rock er fidget erbout, he

would stop right short an' call um fools, say dey git his brains all stirred up. Hit didn't take much ter git Marse Jeemes's brains stirred up!

"I tole you he ain't got no 'pinion er women folks. One day he tryin' ter set me ergin um; he 'gun ter quote scriptur' an' sich lack. He tell me dat St. Paul say in de Bible dat 'oman am de weaker wessel, an' den he say dat's so, dat dey ain't got no sense an' no strength an' ain't no 'count, no how.

"Dat kinder riled me, an' I ups an' says, I ain't guine ter 'spute St. Paul no way nur fashion, but dis I will say, dat ef 'oman be de weaker wessel, I tell you, sar, she carries er full sail.

"I wuz studyin' right den 'bout my wife, Nancy. I knowed mighty good when dat 'oman git her head sot on doin' suppen I sprecify she *shan't* do, I might git ez mad ez thunder an' turn de house upside down, but dat ain't 'sturb her none; she guine have her way jist de same.

"Dat weak, little wessel wid er full sail ain't guine let all my stormin' an' blowin' capsize her, wuth er cent; she guine sail right whar she boun', 'dout axin' no odds er Joe Pinetop, dat's sartin."

This reflection seemed to be highly gratifying to Uncle Joe; he chuckled over it in great delight. He resumed: "I alus shall believe Marse Jeemes wuz erbout half cracked. One day he sont for Nancy, an' tell her he 'mos' dead, dat he de b'le'e he dyin' sho 'nuff. Off I goes post-haste fer Dr. Jones. While I gone Marse Jeemes tell Nancy he so nigh dead he can't talk no mo', dat he speechless. When Dr. Jones come, Nancy tells him whut Marse Jeemes say, an' den de doctor goes

to de bed an' axes 'im some questions. Marse Jeemes jist shake his head, his tongue done stiff. Dr. Jones 'zamines 'im good, an' den he turn ter Nancy an' say: 'Dis is er mighty sick man; sumpen must be done at once. Nancy, go make me a big mustard plaster, an' fetch it here quick.'

"When Nancy fotch dat plaster de doctor tied it tight eroun' Marse Jeemes's body wid strips er cloth. Den he sont Nancy outen de room, tuck er book, an' sot down by er window ter read, an' ain't pay no 'tention ter Marse Jeemes. When dat mustard 'gun ter burn purty bad Marse Jeemes, he 'gun ter fidget an' fling his arms erbout, but Dr. Jones 'ten' lack he ain't take no notice er dat. Presney dat mustard git too much fer Marse Jeemes. He can't stand it no longer, so he jumps right up in bed an' hollers out at de top er his lungs: 'Doctor, for de Lord's sake, take dis confounded thing offen me. I's burnin' up.'

"Den Dr. Jones flung back his head an' laugh fit ter kill hisse'f, an' Marse Jeemes cut up lack he gone clean 'stracted.

"Presney Dr. Jones say, 'Well, Nancy, come an take off de mustard plaster, it have done its work, it have gi'n speech ter de dumb an' brung de dead ter life!' Den he 'mos' split his sides er laffin.' I seed de doctor know Marse Jeemes wa'n't sick sho' 'nuff, he jist playin' 'possum.

"But ez long ez Marse Jeemes lib, ef you want to see him riled an' heer him cuss, you just 'gin ter talk erbout dat mustard plaster.

"Pore ole Marse Jeemes! 'Fo' de war he wuz one er de big bugs, an' had piles an' piles er money; but a'ter he los' his money an' darkies, he

come down mighty po'. His head wuz stuffed full er book-l'arnin', an' dar wa'n't no room in dar fer no commonsense. He say he don't want none er dat stuff, dat er raccoon got jest ez much commensense ez anybody. (He got mor'n Marse Jeemes, dat's de trufe!)

"Pole ole Marster! I wonders whar he be an' whut he doin' sense he ceasted. He say he 'spect ter spen' his time studyin' de stars, jis' sportin' 'roun frum one ter t'other. He 'clar's he's guine turn ter dust, ter be sartin, but dat dust guine turn ter flowers an' weeds, an' de potter-carriers guine bottle some uv it up an' sell it ter sick folks. He sprecify dat nuffin' ain't nebber guine die sho' 'nuff, hit jest guine turn ter suppen else.

"I ain't say I b'le'e dat, but maybe Marse Jeemes is turned ter a goose."

V.

ON THE AMAZON.

Moonlight on the great Montana. Along the banks of the Amazon gleam the white tents of the cinchona merchant and his cascarilleros.

The toil of the day is over; most of the waxen tapers within the tents are extinguished; the Brazilian bark hunters have retired to rest; and the stillness which broods over the vast forest is broken only by the screams of the howling monkeys, and now and again the mournful cry of the nighthawk, known as the *alma perdita,* or lost soul.

The ambiaba trees, with their white trunks and silvery leaves gleaming against the dark background of the forest, look weird and beautiful in the moonlight.

Standing beneath a luxuriant mimosa tree, whose drooping branches trail into the water, is a young and beautiful girl. In her hands are large clusters of the exquisite violet flowers of the juvia tree. She is watching a white umbrella bird and a scarlet flamingo, and so intent is she, and so still is the night, that she gives a quick start when close beside her a few notes are struck on a guitar, followed in a moment by a rich baritone voice which she recognizes.

"Maiden, come, my boat is waiting."

The music rings out clear as a bell over the water, and the next instant a canoe comes in sight. Its sole occupant is a man clad in a scarlet poncho of vicuna wool. He has removed his sombrero and is reclining in the stern of the boat. As he touches the strings of the guitar, his eye is taking in, with all the keen delight of an artist, the calm, weird beauty of the tropic scene. No sooner does he perceive the girl than he drops his guitar, the canoe shoots forward, and the next instant he springs ashore and takes her hand.

"You here?" he says. "Now, this is charming. Come, let's go a little way up the river; there is a gentle breeze out there, and the air is as soft as balm. Was there ever such a beautiful night? See here," he continued, as he lifts her into the canoe. "See here, I have shot some macaws and toucans for your breakfast. And best of all, here is a big, fat jacana, or water-hen; you may preserve its crest of twelve black feathers to swell your list of curios, if you like. And look at the head of this big king vulture, what a beautiful shade of orange it is; but you can see that better by daylight. Its plumage is a delicate cream color. You see I have not been entirely idle this afternoon, nor have I forgotten that a very cruel and blood-thirsty maiden would expect some trophy upon my return, and would be disappointed if I presented myself empty-handed."

The girl's sweet, silvery laugh rings out over the water.

"And there you are quite right," she says. "When I came to the Montana with papa, I exacted a promise from him, that he and all the cascarilleros

should lay all their trophies in the shape of animals and birds at my feet, so that I might select whatever I wish to preserve. This king-fisher (how beautiful he is!) my tiger crane, flamingo, and other rare birds, as well as my ocelot, armadillo, and puma, I shall have mounted by a taxidermist at Para. When we return to Rio, don't you think I had better open a museum?"

"A capital idea. I will give you half my studio for the exhibition."

"You are very generous. I will consider your offer. By the way, Mr. Foster, have you been painting any more pictures? Not any so beautiful as the moonlight scene in the Passeo Publico, I am quite sure. I like that much better than any of your forest pictures."

"The picture that I value most, the one that is far the most beautiful, is that of yourself. And this picture is indelibly engraved on—my heart."

Lilly Brandon gives him a quick glance, then says with a half-pensive smile:

"We have been very happy here, have we not? I wonder shall we ever see the grand old forest again. I am saddened at the thought of leaving it."

"This is a land of enchantment, romance and dreams. See the water-lilies gleaming in the moonlight. They were once maidens like you, but have been changed by the enchanter's wand into these white flowers. I am under the spell of all this beauty and witchery to-night, and there is no telling what absurd things I may say or do. If I turn you over into the river it will not be my fault; the enchanters must bear all the blame."

His dark eyes have a magnetic power to-night, and the girl at his side feels a strange thrill under their intent gaze.

"Suppose we never go back," he says, presently. "Suppose we go on, and on, and on."

"It is time for us to return, even now," she says, a little anxiously.

He laughs.

"Don't be afraid, little white flower. I shall not turn the boat over unless——" he moves closer to her and takes her hand—"unless you tell me that you would rather live with your sister-flowers out there than to be *my* Lilly, *mine,* I say, henceforth and forever."

The boat is drifting on. He still holds her hand.

"You love me, then?" she asks, in a tone so low he bends his head to catch it.

"Yes, I love you with my whole soul, with every fibre of my being. I love you,

" 'With a love that never shall die,
'Till the sun grows cold,
And the stars are old,
And the leaves of the Judgement Book unfold.' "

The man's magnetism and ardor hold the girl entranced, spellbound. Suddenly his mood changes. A soft light comes into his face. He raises her hand to his lips and says in a voice grown very gentle and entreating:

"Pardon, sweetheart. I see I have frightened you with my mad wooing. Pardon, my beautiful

white flower, and tell me—yes, tell me truly if you love me."

"Yes, I love you," replies the girl, very simply. "I love you with all my heart."

He stoops and presses a long, lingering kiss on her lips; then lifting her to her feet, they stand upright in the boat. For a moment he gazes at the beautiful scene around them, then up at the brilliant constellations overhead.

"Here, then, in this enchanted forest, on the bosom of the Amazon, under the Southern Cross, we plight our troth, vowing to love each other until death us do part."

The boat is drifting on. They sit down again.

Suddenly on the silence of the night there sounds a roar that shakes the forest, and is blood-curdling in its ferocity. The girl gives a smothered cry, and turns white to the lips. With one quick apprehensive, penetrating glance in all directions around him, Foster soon perceives at a distance of a few hundred feet, on the farther bank of the river, the cat-like form of some animal which appears to be following the canoe.

They are now some distance from the main body of the river, having unconsciously entered a tributary stream, which at this point is not more than fifty feet wide. Thoroughly aroused to the danger of the situation, Foster applies his oars with vigor, and tries to out-distance their pursuer. The animal now comes boldly into view, and the moonlight falling on its flanks reveals the black rosetted body of a huge jaguar. It is steadily following them, sometimes stealthily, sometimes boldly, watching a favorable opportunity for attack.

The stream is becoming narrower, and the danger momentarily more imminent. The only hope of escape seems to be to make a sudden turn, row rapidly past the animal before it becomes aware of their intention, and reach the main body of the river ere it can overtake them. Foster fully realizes the danger of such a bold stroke, but no other means of escape presents itself to him. He dares not fire at the jaguar, lest in the uncertain light he should miss his aim and bring about a more certain and ferocious attack.

Carefully placing his pistols on the seat beside him, by a rapid movement he turns the canoe. The next moment the little skiff shoots forward like an arrow under the powerful strokes of his muscular arms. The jaguar seeing his prey about to escape, seems to form a sudden resolution. In three bounds he attains a point directly opposite the canoe, and crouching a moment, makes a bold plunge. As his body shoots through the air, the black rosettes on his yellow skin gleam like huge, baleful eyes.

The girl in the canoe gives a piercing scream, and falls forward in the bottom of the boat entirely unconscious.

Quickly seizing one of his revolvers Foster fires, and knows from the sudden growl that the ball has not missed its mark.

Though evidently wounded the infuriated beast will not relinquish the desperate onset. It is gaining upon them. It is only a few feet from the boat. Foster empties his other revolver. The shot takes effect in the animal's neck.

The canoe now almost bounds from the water

under Foster's masterly strokes, and the jaguar, his strength gradually failing, is seen to drop behind. In a little while its body sinks beneath the waves, and a dark red stain mars the beauty of the limpid blue water of the Amazon.

VI.

DIVIDED.

Long, undulating stretches of yellow sand. Bleak and barren hills gleaming white in the moonlight. No sound to break the stillness save the murmur of the ocean, and the faint and distant sound of harp and violin. The moon that floats overhead in a cloudless sky is at its full, and from the windows of the white cottages along the beach flash innumerable lights. Far away to the south gleams Body's Island light, like a brilliant star of great magnitude. Strolling slowly along the beach are a man and a woman. They are walking in the direction of Jockey's Ridge, and have left the other couples far behind. On the face of the man is an expression of deep sadness. The woman regards him for a moment, then lays her hand gently on his arm.

"Something is troubling you. What is it?"

He turns and looks intently into the dark eyes raised questioningly to his. For a moment he does not reply, then he says in a voice whose calmness belies the deep emotion which is blanching his face:

"I cannot tell you. My lips must be dumb. But I feel that between you and me there are times when audible speech is unnecessary. I must leave

you to-morrow. For the few hours that remain let us strive to banish painful thoughts."

"I shall miss you so. These summer days have been the happiest of my life. What shall I do when you are gone? I shall be so lonely, so dreadfully lonely."

"Yes, I know; and that is the hardest part of going. If I could only bear all the pain that this parting must bring! But I have known for many days that such will not be the case."

"Then, why will you go?"

She raises her beautiful dark eyes to his with a look so imploring that he turns away. But in a moment he stands before her with a firm, set face. There is a note of reproach and entreaty in his voice, as he answers:

"Do not tempt me. You know why I must go. I have already stayed too long, far too long."

"This friendship of ours has been so beautiful, so sweet. What harm can it do to her or you or me? All my life I have wanted a friend like you, one who at once understands and sympathizes with all my feelings. Do you know that I have often thought this a most singular thing. I wonder why you alone of all people in the world should understand me."

He cannot repress a sad smile at the singular guilelessness of this woman, whose heart he reads like an open book. His voice is very gentle, as he says:

"Some day the scales will fall from your eyes, and then you will see things as they really are. On that day you will understand why to-night I tell you I must leave you."

"But our friendship has been so beautiful," she repeats, in a tone of deep sadness and reproach.

"Far *too* beautiful. But how hard we have tried, my sweet and noble friend, to be *only* friends. And if we have failed we have done so in all innocence and good intent. I call God to witness this night, that the feeling I have for you is the purest, the highest, the holiest that I have ever felt for mortal woman. It has changed and glorified my life. Nevertheless, I am not deceived. While I am strong, let me leave you. It is far better that I should go now. The longer the delay the greater will be the pain."

"It breaks my heart to think of what your life will be." Her head droops and her eyes are blinded with tears.

"Yes, my life is a wreck not pleasant to contemplate. But if we sow to the wind we must reap the whirlwind. For better, for worse, saith the marriage vow. If the Dead-Sea fruit has turned to ashes on my lips, I must make the best of the ashes. My honor binds me to keep the faith I plighted, and God helping me, I will."

A sudden change comes over the face of the woman. She lays her hand gently on his arm.

"Forgive me!" she says, in a low, earnest voice. "Forgive me! You are so noble, so brave, so strong. I shall think of you always as the noblest man I ever knew. I did not know—indeed, I did not know—until to-night. I thought we were only friends. I have been so happy that I have not dreamed of danger. And I have longed, so earnestly, to throw a little sunshine into your life."

"Yes, I know; I understand and appreciate. No

shadow of blame can attach to you. I know that your soul is as spotless as snow."

He stoops and raises her small white hand, reverently, to his lips. Then he says in a voice grown husky from emotion:

"God alone will ever know what it costs me to say and to leave unsaid what I have to-night."

Again she raises her beautiful eyes to his, and the light in them seems to him a glimpse of heaven.

"Then know that the scales *have* fallen from my eyes, and—I understand. And so, good-bye."

A long, lingering hand-clasp, a long, lingering look into each other's eyes, and,

"Two are walking apart forever,
And wave their hands for a mute farewell."

VII.

LITTLE MARSE HAL.

"YES, sar, dat's de place whar my ole marster useter lib; but, law! ef you could er seen dat place 'fo' de war, when de ole house wus dar, it would er done yer eyes good ter look at it. 'Kase dar wa'n't no place 'roun' heer dat could hole er light ter dis one. "Lord amassy, dat house de finis' one ter be sho'. It had er dozen rooms in it, and pi'zass mighty nigh all eroun' it. When I shets me eyes now, sometimes, 'pears lack I kin see it, jes' lack hit useter look when ole marster was a libin'. In de summertime, when de trees wus full er lebes, an' de grass an' clober had sprung up in de yard, nobody needn't want nothin' no better dan to set down under one er dem trees, an' listen ter de bu'ds er singin' an' de locusts er holl'in' errywhar'. Oh, Lord, ain't I sot dar many a time ub er Sunday ebenin' an' git so lazy an' feel so good dat 'fo' I knowed it, I wus gone smack ter sleep.

"I thanks de Lord dat house neber got bu'nt up while ole marster wuz er libin'. 'Kase de ole man's daddy built dat house, an' he thought more un it 'an er little. 'Twould er broke 'is heart ter had dem purty trees 'stroyed lack dey wus be dat far'.

"Mistis, Marse John an' Marse Seth, hate ter lose dat house mighty bad, an' Marse Seth he tuck de 'shorence an' had er 'nother one put up; dat one ye see dar now."

"Were Marse John an' Marse Seth your old Marster's children?" I asked of the old negro, in whose story I was becoming interested.

"Marse John he wus, an' Marse Seth he wa'n't. I'll tell ye how it wuz; ole Marster come be me th'oo 'is mammy. She lef' me an' er pasel er more niggers ter 'im when she die. I wuz er little bit er young un' when I fell ter ole marster, not much higher 'n er bar'l. I jes' kin 'member it.

"Ole Marster he wuz gettin' 'long right smart in years 'fo' he git married. He had jes' had de ole house 'paired an' fixed up mighty fine when he brung young Mistis home. I 'members jes' ez good ez ef it wuz yistiddy—de day I fust seed mistis. She had jes' gittin' out de kerridge, whar stopped at de big gate, an' wuz walkin' wid ole marster to'rds de house when I fust seed 'er. 'Bless de Lord!' I say. 'Ef dat ain't de purtiest 'oman I eber sot me eyes on.'

"I wuz hid 'hind er tree er peepin' at um, when presney I look, an' see er little boy comin' 'long 'hind um on krotches. Dat wuz Marse Seth, what wuz de son ub mistis's fust husban' 'fo' he had her. Dat boy had suppen 'nother de matter wid 'is knee, an' he couldn't walk er step widout dem krotches.

"Well, a'ter we git 'quainted wid mistis we lub 'er mighty good. She wuz alus doin' suppen fur some un us, 'mos' speshly when we gits sick. She useter go right dar in de kitchen hers'f an' doc-

tor us. An' ole Marster, he did, too. Ef dey ain't poured er pasel er stuff down me! 'Kase when I wuz er youngun' I useter be mighty poo'ly sometimes.

"'Peared lack ole marster an' mistis alus thought de worl' er me. Dey tuck me ter wait in de house, an' 'ten' ter Marse Seth. Dat boy thought mo' er me 'an air nother darkey 'bout de place.

"Marse John, ole marster's fust son, he wuz er gre't, big, peart chile, an' ole marster wuz mighty proud er him. A'ter er while Miss Kate she come erlong. She wuz er purty little thing, wid right black eyes an' ha'r. But none er mistis's chillun wa'n't purty's little Marse Hal. Mistis had er pasel er chillun, but dey all die but free. An' Miss Kate she wuz 'bout fifteen years older'n little Marse Hal. He wuz born 'bout two years 'fo' de war broke out. Lord! how errybody lubbed dat chile! He wuz jes' lack er little angul, an' de sensiblest chile I eber see. He wuz nothin' but er baby; but de darkies all call 'im Marse Hal. 'Pears lack I kin see 'im yit, trottin' up an' down de front po'ch, straddle er stick hoss, wid 'is yaller curls er-flyin' out behind 'im. Dar wuz one thing cur'ous 'bout dat chile, he alus had er tear drop in de corner ub 'is eye, an' fast ez ye'd wipe it out it 'u'd come again. Hit make 'is eyes look kind er solum, eben when he wuz laffin'.

"Dat chile did ha' de curisest notions ter be sho'. One night he an' me wuz settin' on de front steps, an' I look at Marse Hal an' see 'im lookin' mighty hard right up de sky. Presney I says, 'What ye thinkin' 'bout, honey?'

"'I wuz thinkin',' says he, 'what de stars kin be. What is dey, Unc' Miles?'

"He turn an' look right straight at me wid 'is gre't, big solum eyes.

"'Lord, Marse Hal,' says I, 'I dunno what dey is, 'ceptin' dey's stars,' says I.

"'I'll tell ye what I thinks dey is,' says he. 'I thinks dey's de good Lord's candles,' says he.

"'Lord, Marse Hal! What do he do wid um in de daytime?' says I.

"'Why, Unc' Miles, in corse he blows um out,' says he.

"He sholy wuz er sensible chile.

"Marse Seth, Marse John an' Miss Kate, dey wuz all grown. Marse Seth, he wuz free. An' ole marster, he wuz gittin' 'long mighty ole when Marse Hal wuz born; an' he wuz same ez 'is eyeballs.

"We useter ha' mighty good times twell de war broke out, but dat upsot errything. I useter hear um talkin' 'bout freedom an' sich; but, Lord! I didn't keer nothin' 'bout bein' free. I wuz jist ez happy ez er coon dar wid our folks, playin' wid de chillun, bilin' lasses, poppin' popcorn fur um, an' sich, when I didn't ha' no wuck ter do. 'Pears lack dey all thought jam by ez much er me ez ef I wuz white ez dey wuz.

"But when de war broke out, dat upsot errything. Marse John he wollunteered an' went wid er pasel mo' our mens down ter Ro'noke Islan' ter 'pare fer de Yankees. Dat wuz er skeerry time shore's you er born! We could hear dem cannon guns down ter Ro'noke, gwine boom! boom! crack! crack! Dey soun' jes' lack thunder.

"I hear folks say some er dem cannon guns down dar so big er man could git inside un um. But thanks de Lord! I never know how dang'ous dey wuz twell a'ter de battle wuz done, an' Ro'noke tuck.

"I useter feel mighty sorry fur Marse Seth, 'long den. He want ter go ter de war so bad, an' he couldn't do it 'kaze he wuz lame an' had ter walk on krotches. I 'members one day he an' Miss Kate wuz settin' under de big elum dar in de lane, an' I wuz comin' 'long home from ole Unc' Lem's th'oo de fiel', an' I heered um talkin'. Marse Seth he say:

"'I feels lack er coward when I thinks ub all de udder boys gone erway ter fight fer dey kentry,' says he, 'an' I stayin' home. I can't neber be no sarvis ter my kentry,' says he, 'kaze I ain't nothin' but er broken staff,' says he.

"'But ye kin be ub sarvis ter we all,' says Miss Kate. 'What would we do widout you? Father's gettin' ole an' feeble, an' dar ain't nobody but you ter 'tend de farm an' look a'ter things,' says she.

"He look at her mighty gr'teful lack, an' he say:

"'Hit's er gre't pleasure ter me ter do all I kin fer you an' all dat I lubs,' says he, 'but I kin do mighty little,' says he.

"'Ye don't do yerse'f jistice,' says Miss Kate. 'Kaze ye ain't strong an' well lack some mens ain't no reason ye can't be ub sarvis. Folks kin wuck wid dey head's well ez wid dey hands,' says she.

"'Do I wuck verry hard wid my head, my dear?' says he, sorter smilin'.

"'Yes, ye do,' says she. 'What would become

er de farm, an' who would 'tend ter de darkies ef it wa'n't fer you, an' your thinkin' an' plannin'? Ter say nothin' ub de comfort you is ter Ma an' me,' says she.

"'Do you value my sarwises so highly, an' am I r'ally er comfort ter you, Kate?'

"'Kin you doubt it?' says she, sorter blushin', but lookin' up right in 'is face.

"He neber said nothin', but jist reached out an' tuck 'er han' an' kissed it. An' den dey got up an' started fer de house. Dey didn't talk much gwine 'long, an' hit 'peared ter me dey look mighty solum.

"Marse Seth an' Miss Kate, dey wa'n't no kin, but eber sence dey wuz little chillun dey alus thought de worl' er one 'nother.

"Well, things went 'long sorter smoove twell we heard de guns er-firin' down ter Ro'noke, an' knowed de Yankees had got dar. Lord! ef we wa'n't skeered den! 'Kaze we wuz 'spectin' all de time Marse John gwine git killed.

"Dey wuz down dar seben mont's 'parin' fer de Yankees 'fo' dey come. But when dey do come hit didn't take um long ter whip our mens.

"In corse, hit didn't, dey might known dat; 'kaze all de odds wuz 'g'inst us.

"I heered Marse John say de fust thing dem Yankees done when dey git dar 'long side de Islan' wuz ter po' er whole pasel er red hot shot ober dar, untwel dey sot de bar'ks erfar an' bu'nt um up. Den dey pou'd out solid shot untwel dey lebled de bre's-wucks, yes, sar, bles' yo' soul, lebeled um ter de groun'!

"Gen'l Bu'nside had er powerful fleet er wes-

sels out dar; yes, sar, an' er tremenjous army, too; an' how's Cunnel Shaw, wid his han'ful er mens gwine stan' g'inst all dem odds? He couldn't do it, dat's all. But Marse John say dey sho'ly did fight brave, our mens did. One man jes' stood up on top de bre's-wuck, 'fo' dey to' it down, an' spreeted open 'is coat an' 'sposed 'is bre's, an' cuss de Yankees, an' holler at um ter shoot away an' kill 'im ef day kin. De shot wuz er flyin' roun' 'im right an' left, but 'fo' de Lord, dat man neber so much ez got 'is skin scratched! Hit sho'ly was cur'ous.

"Lord amassy! I wouldn't been dar fer de worl'. Wid dem bung-shells er-bustin' an' dem cannons er-farin' all eroun', how anybody done ter keep frum gittin' killed 'stonished me. One er dem bung-shells bu'sted right nigh Marse John, an' th'owed 'im down, an' kivered 'im up in du't. Hit blowed de man whar wuz standin' by Marse John way up in de air, an' to' 'im all ter flinders. Hit sholy wuz a wonder Marse John neber got killed, 'kaze dey had ter dig him an' some udder mens, whar got kivered up when dat bung-shell bu'sted, smack outen de groun'. Dey wuz nigh 'bout smothered ter def.

"When de Yankees landed dey had ter come th'oo er ma'sh, 'fo' dey could git ter whar Cunnel Shaw's army wuz. An' our mens, dey had two gre't, big cannon guns sot right at de een' er dat road, jist er-playin' on um ez dey come erlong. One man jist tuck an' stood right on top er one er dem guns, an' dar he stood, wid 'is s'o'd in 'is han', cuttin' some er dem Yankees all ter pieces, twell dey killed 'im. Yes, sar, dey jes' made sas-

sage meat outen 'im. He wuz de biggis fool I eber see ter th'oo hisse'f erway in dat fashion.

"Well, sar, de Yankees, dey went o' dem cannons; dey didn't keer fer um!

"Our mens dey fou't mighty brave, but dey couldn't stan' 'g'inst all dem Yankees—dey might known dat—so dey had ter h'ist de white flag an' s'render. Den de Yankees tuck um pris'nus, an' put um on a gre't, big boat whar dey call de 'Spauldin',' an' neber gin um nothin' ter eat 'ceptin' raw pork an' hard tack.

"Mistis, she useter sen' Marse John er pasel er cakes an' sassage, an' one stuff er 'nother, when de boats went down ter Ro'noke, 'fo' de Yankees git dar. But a'ter dey tuck um pris'nus, dey jamby starve ter def. 'Kaze how's my young marster, whar wuz useter de fat er de lan', gwine eat dat hard tack, whar wuz jes' lack chips, er dat po'k, whar dey ain't cook none 'ceptin' po'in' hot water on to it in de bar'l? Jes' well gi' it ter 'im raw ez not ter cook it no better'n dat.

"Marse John, he jis' tuck an' heaved it o'erboard when dey gi' it ter him. Lord! ef I ain't heerd Marse John tell 'bout dem things so much hit nigh 'bout 'pears ter me I fou't down ter Ro'noke mese'f.

"Some our folks 'bout heer dey got all de boats dey could fine, an' sunk um upside down, dar in de channel, twixt Ro'noke Islan' an' Croatan; tryin' fer ter keep de Yankees frum guine ter Liz'beth City. But 'twa'n't no use! De Yankees didn't make no mo' er dem boats 'an de would er turkle; dey jis' blowed um all ter flinders, an' come right erlong th'oo.

"When dey git dar ter town dey 'leased de pris-'ners, an' Marse John come home. Lord! ef we wa'n't glad ter see 'im! Mistis an' Miss Kate dey right nachly cried fer joy. Marse John sho'ly did look scan'lus do! He hadn't been shaved none ner had 'is hair cut none in jamby eight months. He sho'ly did 'mind me ub er b'ar. He look right grizzly.

"Well, he stayed long dar home right smart while, den he went erway ergin ter fight de Yankees some mo'. He wa'n't done yit. 'Pears lack he hate de Yankees so bad he couldn't res' 'dout he's fightin' um.

"We all sho'ly did feel lonesome a'ter Marse John lef'. Hit seem jis' lack somebody ner wuz dead. We didn't know what wuz gwine ter come er him er de rest er our folks 'nother. 'Kaze de Yankees, when de git dar to 'Liz'beth City, dey jis' scattered all o' de kentry, rippin' an' tearin' an' doin'. Some er our mens j'in'd um, an' called dese'f buff'loes. When our folks heered er dat dey wuz mad ez blazes. Ole marster an' Marse Seth cussed um blue, 'kaze dey jine de Yankees, er-fightin' 'g'inst dey own folks.

"'Twixt all dem an' de g'rillers, what dey call bush-whackers, 'kaze dey hide 'hind bushes, trees an' sich lack, an' fights on de sly—twixt all dem, thinks I, how's anybody gwine keep frum gittin' killed. I wuz so skeered I didn't know what ter do. Sometimes I couldn't eben ha' de heart ter pray none. Ef it hadn't been fer lebin' our folks, I b'le'e I'd er gone in de woods an' hid in er holler tree, lack er squir'l. But some er de darkies wuz happy ez dey kin be, 'kaze dey hope de Yankees

gwine whip, an' dey kin git de fredum. But dat wa'n't me. No, sar! I wuz jis' ez free ez I want ter be.

"Some er de niggers done gone ter jine de Yankees. But none er ole marster's hadn't gone yit. Dey neber lef' twell de nigger reg'ment come. Dat wuz er skeerry time, shore's you er born! Dey had white officers o' um; but when de folks seed all dem nigger pickets all about, dey sutney wuz skeered. One night er pasel er um come out our way, an' camped right out yander in de fiel'. When hit got good an' dark we could see de camp-far's er burnin', an' all dem soldiers gethered roun'. Dat's de fust time I seed Marse Seth skeered. He didn't know how many er ole marster's darkies he could 'pend on, an' wid all dem niggers out dar so nigh de house, hit wuz dang'ous. So Marse Seth, widout sayin' er word ter nobody, he went out dat night an' axed de white Cap'n ter sen' er guard ter 'tect our folks. An' he done it, too; but de guard was mostly niggers do. Dey neber pestered nuffin; but next mornin' dey wuz all gone, an' nigh 'bout all er ole marster's darkies done gone wid um. Der wa'n't but five lef' 'sides me, an' ole marster had sixty head un um. Jamby all de darkies 'bout heer went off dat night an' jine de nigger sold'ers.

"I went out dar nex' mornin' ter whar dey had de camps, an' bless yo' soul! ef dey hadn't bu'nt up nigh 'bout all de fence 'roun' de fiel'. An' dem wuz bran' new cyprus rails, too. I wuz so put out I didn't know what ter do, 'kaze I knowed I had ter go right ter wuck an' maul some mo'.

"Well, arter dat I didn't git so mighty skeered

twell de g'rillers come a'ter de horses. Dey come one night an' 'manded de stable key f'um ole marster, say dey wanted some hosses. Dar wuz er whole pasel un um, an' ole marster knowed he didn't ha' no way ter 'zist um, so he gin um de key. Two er th'ee weeks 'fo' dat I had gitten two gre't, big car'y-log chains an' stretched um 'cross de stable do' an' fastened um tight, ter keep anybody frum gittin' dem hosses. I knowed dem critters couldn't come th'oo de chains ter sabe der life. De g'rillers dey fumbled an' dey fumbled at de chains, tryin' fer ter ondo um, but dey couldn't do it do. I wuz hid 'hind de kitchen, watchin' um. When dey fine dey can't ondo de chains, dey 'gun ter holler at de hosses, an' dey skeered um so bad dey jest squatted right down an' come smack under dem chains, an' went er-rippin' an' kittin' all ober de barn-lot. De g'rillers tuck a'ter um, tryin' fer ter ketch um; but dey must er knowed who dey wuz, 'kaze dey jist snorted an' kicked up der heels, an 'tickler de mules, an' run so fas' ye might jis' ez well try ter ketch lightnin' ez dem creeters. When I seed de g'rillers runnin' an' hollerin' fit ter break der neck, I jis' holler out:

"'Go it, now! Ketch um ef ye kin!' 'kaze I knowed dey couldn't do it ter sabe der gizzards. I 'spected ev'ry minute ter see some er dem mules kick um high ez er kite. Presney dey lebe, mad ez dey kin be. But dey ain't git no hosses ner mules nuther; 'kaze dem creeters had too much sense ter be ketch by er pack er varments lack dem g'rillers."

Uncle Miles shook with laughter over the recollection of this scene. He resumed:

"We wuz right 'tween two far's. I dunno which I wuz de skeerdest un, de buff'loes er de g'rillers. 'Peared lack dey wuz jis' let loose. Dey had er heart lack er turkle; dey didn't keer fer nothin'.

"When de darkies seed um comin' dey would put right off er-porin' fer de 'quarters.'

"'Long 'bout dem times we couldn't hardly make out ter stem de tide. We wuz study 'spectin' ter git killed. I tell you, sar, 'twas er hard row er stumps.

"We useter hear f'um Marse John sometimes. One time he writ us he got wounded in de arm, an erner time dat dey had tuck 'im pris'ner. An' presney heer come er letter sayin' he had fell in lub wid de prison-keeper's da'ter; an' he say he gwine ter marry her, an fetch 'er home wid 'im when he come. Mistis, she writ an' say she can't neber gi' her consent fer Marse John ter marry er Yankee gal. He writ back dat he can't gi' up 'is sweetheart fer nobody, not eben 'is ma, good ez he lub her. He say he gwine git married ef he lib, jist ez soon ez de war wuz ober. An' he done it, too. When Marse John git 'is head sot on doin' anythin' he gwine do it sho', an' errybody jis' well keep der mouf shet.

"Well, we got 'long right smart and didn't ha' much trouble smack twell Richmond fell. Our folks sho'ly did grebe ter hear dat. It clean broke ole Marster's heart. Hit useter make me cry ter see 'im gwine 'bout dar, wid 'is head bowed down, lack he lost his las' frien'. He wuz mighty ole an' po'ly, an' dat finished 'im.

"Not many days a'ter de news come 'bout Richmon', I seed ole Marster settin' under de big oak in de yard. Dar he sot, leaning up ergin de tree, an' his hat an' stick had fell on de groun'. He look kinder cur'ous, an' I 'gun ter git mighty skeered. I run ter 'im, an' called 'im an' shuch 'im, an' begged 'im ter speak jis' one mo' word ter po' ole Miles what lubed 'im so true; but he wuz dead, sar! Dead an' cole, an' stiff! He wa'n't neber gwine speak ter—me no mo'—twell we meets —whar der ain't gwine be no mo' partin' an' whar de tears is all gwine be wiped erway. Amen!

"A'ter we laid 'im out in de big parlor, I seed little Marse Hal er-peepin' in dar th'oo de do'. I ax 'im what he doin'. He look up at me wid er cur'ous look in dem purty blue eyes an' he say kinder low an' solum:

"'I's watchin' fer de anguls, Unc' Miles. Ma says when good peoples dies, de angels comes an' takes um home ter heben. Pa's good. Why don't dey come a'ter him?'

"'Maybe dey's already been, little Marster,' says I.

"'No, dey ain't,' says he, 'kaze I's been watchin' fer um all day. I wants ter see um when dey comes, an' ax um ter take me, too; 'kaze Pa'll be lonesome widout me. He'll miss me so bad, Unc' Miles.'

"'Lord, honey! Don't you talk like that,' says I. 'An' don't you watch fer de anguls no mo'. I 'specks dey's already been an' tuck ole Marster home ter heb'n. Anguls ain't nuffin' but sperits, an' you can't see er sperit,' says I.

"I knowed I wuz lyin' ter dat chile. 'Kaze ain't

I seed many er sperit wid dese heer eyes er mine. But ye ain't 'bleeged ter tell chillun *errything.* So I tuck little Marse Hal by de han' an' led 'im out in de lane, an' played wid 'im, an' talked ter 'im, jist ter git his mine off de anguls. Lord amassy! he looked jist lack a little angul hisse'f. Dat he did!

"Marse John neber knowed ole Marster wuz dead untwel he wuz done an' bur'ied. When he do come home, he fotch 'is Yankee wife wid 'im. But 'peered lack she wa'n't neber satisfied in dese parts. Marse John say she pinin' fer de Norf. So a'ter erwhile he tuck 'er home; an' dey ain't come back heer ter lib no mo'.

"Dat same summer Marse John went erway, dat blessed chile, little Marse Hal, whar we all sot our hearts on, 'gun ter jist pine erway, an' wilt, lack er tender plant dat de hot sun an' de rough winds is too much fer. Yes, sar, he jis' 'gun ter pine an' pine, an' say he tired all de time, an' 'peered lack his skin got whiter an' his blue eyes bigger an' solumer erry day. At fust we didn't git so mighty oneasy, but at last we seed he wuz dang'ous. Den we all 'gin up errything, an' some un us sot by 'im night an' day. We kotch erry word he said, an' watched erry breath he drawed, an' erry sweet smile dat lit up dem precious eyes. We done all we could, an' de doctor, he come erry day and done all *he* could; but dat sweet chile wuz too tender an' lovin' an' good fer dis worl', an' de Lord wanted 'im up dar wid him; an' I knowed ole marster couldn't neber be satisfied twell he gethered 'im in his arms once mo'. I sot by dat bed many er time, an' ergin an' ergin dem words er

little Marse Hal, 'bout axin' de anguls ter take *him,* too, 'kaze his Pa'd be so lonesum widout him, come back ter me; an' well I knowed dis heer heart wuz 'bleeged ter break. Yes, sar, well I knowed how sad an' lonesome hit gwine ter be when de sunshine had all lef', an' de shaders fell.

"De night he died we all gethered 'roun' de bed. De winders stood open, an' de air wuz sweet wid de smell er roses an' honeysuckle an' jessamin.

"Dar all 'roun' de do', and in de po'ch, an' under de winders, stood piles an' piles er darkies, lack gre't, black clouds 'g'inst de moonlight what flooded de whole worl', lack de sky done open so we kin se de light whar shine 'round de gre't White Throne.

"Errybody had sot der heart on little Marse Hal; an' de tears an' de sobs er white an' black showed how dear he wuz ter all. An' dar he lay wid 'is bref commin' hard, an' 'is eyes haf shet, an' 'is face mos' ez white ez de piller whar his head wid de purty yaller curls wuz restin' 'g'inst. Presney he open 'is eyes right wide, an' er sweet smile lit up his face.

"'I hears de anguls comin', says he. 'Listen! See!'

"Den he shet dem sweet blue eyes an' jine dat angul band, smilin' all de time. An' dat smile neber lef' 'is face; it wuz dar a'ter he wuz dead.

"Did I say dead, marster? Marse Hal ain't dead! he comes in de nighttime an' talks ter me. He don't lay off ter let me fergit 'im. De bu'ds in de trees sing ter me erbout 'im; an' in all de blue flowers I see dem sweet blue eyes, an' de yal-

ler ones fetch back dem curls. No, sar! He don't lay off ter let me fergit 'im.

"You say you wants ter heer de rest, marster? Well, den, de nex' thing comes de far'. When dat big house ketched erfar' an' bu'nt up, hit wuz er turrible sight. But dat wuz de een' er de wust trouble. Right smart while 'fo' dat, Marse Seth been studyin' law, an' useter 'cite ter er lawyer dar ter town. A'ter er while he writ er book, an' made piles er money. Den he went ter er mighty doctor dar ter New York, what koured all kinds er cripples. He kept er stayin' dar ter New York an' writ back de docter 'peared ter be helpin' 'is knee. Dat's all he writ.

"One day Miss Kate wuz settin' on de front po'ch, an' I wuz wuckin' in de flower garden, when presney we look an' see Marse Seth comin' up on hossback. I started ter go an' 'sist 'im ter 'light; but, bless yo' soul, 'fo' I git dar he wuz on de groun' er walkin' to de house widout no krotches er nuffin'. I stood right still er lookin' at 'im wid 'stonishment; but Miss Kate jumped up an' run out ter meet 'im.

"'Oh, Seth, I's so glad,' says she.

"He jest tuck er right in 'is arms an' kissed her time an' ergin. Den we went in de house tergedder an' all had er mighty 'joicin' 'kaze Marse Seth got well.

"An' den de nex' thing come de weddin'; an' nobody neber seed no sweeter bride dan Miss Kate. Dat night dey wuz walkin' 'mongst de flowers an' de moon wuz ez bright ez day. Dey stopped by de lilac bush, an' I heered Marse Seth tell 'er dat

he wuz de happiest man in de worl'. She looked up in 'is face wid er sweet smile, an' say:

"'An' I am de happiest woman. But, Seth,' says she, 'I would er had ye long ergo ef ye had axed me.'

"'Heb'n bless you,' says he, er puttin' 'is arm erroun' her, an' den: 'You know why I didn't, dear,' says he. 'You knows dat I has lubed you fer years an' years—always, in fact, altho' I did not speak.'

"'Yes, Seth, I knows,' says she. 'An' she did, too.

"Women folks is cur'ous creeters. 'Pears lack dey kin look right inter er man's eyes an' read what's writ down deep in 'is heart, widout his sayin' er word. Dey sho'ly is hard ter fool.

"Dat's er long time ergo, but I thinks erbout dem days mighty of'en; an' sometimes I wishes I wuz back dar in de ole times. Yes, sar, right back dar, 'mongst all our folks, wid little Marse Hal er-playin' 'roun' my knee. I ain't neber lubbed nobody good ez I do dat chile. 'Pears lack I kin see 'im yit, wid 'is purty yaller curls, an' 'is sof', white skin, an' dem solum blue eyes, wid dat little tear-drop alus in de corner. I gits ter studyin' sometimes, an' I wunders how dat chile looks in heb'n. But one thing I *knows:* Dar ain't no angul up dar got no brighter crown dan de purty gole curls er little Marse Hal."

VIII.

POEMS.

By Bettie Freshwater Pool.

ANGEL OF MY GETHSEMANE.

Angel of my Gethsemane,
O, hear my pleading cry to thee!
My life falls dead, my faith grows dim,
E'en God forsakes—why turn to him?
The shadows gather, darkness deep
Is closing round me; keep, oh, keep
My hand in thine and comfort me,
Angel of my Gethsemane.

Angel of my Gethsemane,
O, let me show my heart to thee!
My heart that bleeds, and breaks, and dies—
Turn not away thy pitying eyes!
Their light so tender, warm and true,
Falls on my soul like morning dew,
Heal with thy touch of sympathy,
Angel of my Gethsemane.

Angel of my Gethsemane,
I feel 'twas God who sent me thee;
Thy message sweet doth comfort bring,
There's balm of healing on thy wing;
My star of hope will rise again;
Thy ministry is not in vain.
'Tis Christ's own voice that speaks thro' thee,
Angel of my Gethsemane.

Angel of my Gethsemane,
O, let me kneel and break for thee
My box of alabaster sweet,
And pour its perfume at thy feet;
And let the incense swiftly rise
To highest heights of yonder skies,
Whose morning light now breaks for me,
Angel of my Gethsemane.

SUMMER TWILIGHT.

The sun sank low, and the twilight fell,
The shadows deepened on hill and dell;
The evening star, with its soft, clear light,
Gleam'd like a gem on the brow of night.

The roses nodded and went to sleep,
The moon-flower op'ed her eye to peep,

With timid glance at the silver sheen
Of night's majestic, glorious queen.

The rivulet hushed its 'plaining song,
As it flowed the lilies pale among,
And touched their lips with sweet caress,
And warmed their hearts with love's impress.

The elm trees whispered soft and low,
The fireflies flashed their ambient glow,
The song of the mock bird, sweet and clear,
Woke the slumb'ring echoes far and near.

The sheep lay down in their pastures green,
The kine returned to their homes serene,
And darkness fell, like a sombre veil,
O'er field and meadow, hill and dale.

THE WILL-O'-THE-WISP.

My home is in bogs and morasses,
I hide me away from the light,
The broad glare of day never sees me,
I venture not out save at night.

I am light as the air
As I dance, as I float,
And my form is as fair
As a fairy's bright boat.

I glide in and out like a phantom,
Some fear me, and many admire,
Flee not when I come or I follow,
Pursue me and I will retire.

I'm a spirit of night
In a form strange and weird,
In my breath there is blight,
Plants and flowers I have seared.

In many a legend and romance
A place of importance I hold,
And theme I have been for the poet,
In ages and countries untold.

Though I hide in a fen
In the damp and the dark,
I allure many men
By my meteor spark.

OUR FLOWER AND STAR.

As some fair rose that lifts its head,
To greet the morning sunlight warm,
But ere the evening comes is dead,
Shattered by some passing storm,
So perished *our flower.*

But as the rose again will bloom,
And grace perchance some fairer scene,
In some bright land beyond the tomb,
Where storm of anguish ne'er hath been,
May bloom *our flower*.

As some grand comet, bright and bold,
Eclipsing orbs of lesser light,
Which as we wond'ringly behold
Is deep engulfed in darkest night,
So vanished *our star*.

But as that comet's fleeting light,
Perchance illumines some higher sphere,
In heaven more gloriously bright,
Than when we gazed upon it here,
May shine *our star*.

DREAMS.

As when some one on desert strand
Remote from all he loves on earth,
Sees in a dream the happy band
That erst did gather 'round his hearth,
And smiles in sleep and opes his arms,
To clasp them tight, so near they seem,
When fades the scene with all its charms,
And soon he knows 'twas but a dream,

So, oft across the silence, dear,
That lies between thy heart and mine,
Bright visions of old joys appear,
Which now as then seem half divine;
Again thy voice sounds in mine ear,
Again thy glances fondly beam,
But on my cheek soon falls a tear,
For I remember I but dream.

SONG.

Softly the breeze murmurs by, love,
And brightly the wild flowers bloom,
Gaily the birds sing on high, love,
The warm air is filled with perfume.
But o'er me a sadness is stealing,
That nought but thy presence can cheer,
Day by day still more revealing,
Without thee my life would be drear.

CHORUS:

Come to me, come to me, dearest!
If but in dreams while I sleep.
Come to me, come to me, dearest,
Why do you leave me to weep?

Drowsy and sweet hums the bee, love,
And gently the stream ripples by,
Green grows the grass on the lea, love,
And fair spreads the blue sky on high.
But still I sit sad and lonely,
And long for thy bright smile in vain,
Thou, dearest one, and thou only,
Canst bring to me gladness again.

DE FLEA.

Good Masser, 'sturb me not, I pray,
Dus early at de break er day,
I'se had a very awful fight,
An' has not slep' one wink dis night,
De fleas made up dey mine, 'tis plain,
Ter tackle me wid might and main.
I tell you, sar, der name is legion,
Dey come frum all eroun' dis region
An' sot on me, untwell I think
Dey 'tended all my blood to drink.
I sho'ly made a mighty fight
Ter let 'em know whut wuz my spite,
But how dey hopt, an' how dey bit!
An' how I jumpt, an' how I hit!
I slapt one hur, I slapt one dare,
Untwell I 'gun to clean dispair,

'Kaze time I think I got him snug
He's gone, dat black consarned bug!
An' lit somewhar' an' bit ergin
An' made me jump jes' lack er pin
Had stuck its p'int clean throo my hide
An' come out on de tother side.
I git ez mad ez I kin be,
An holler at dat blessed flea,
An' tell 'im I gwine ketch him shore
An' mash him 'twell I make 'im roar.
But 'pear lack he ain't got no year,
Leastways, he 'tends dat he can't hear,
An' keeps on biting jes' de same,
Untwell he sets me all aflame.
I neber was so flounder flat,
I feels jes' lack er drownded rat.

LITTLE ELSIE.

Gently fold her lily hands,
  Softly close her eyes of blue,
Tenderly on her fair brow,
  Smooth the locks of golden hue.

Tranquilly she sleeps to-night,
  Free from every grief and pain,
Calmly lay her to her rest,
  On her soul not one dark stain.

Early did she fade away,
Like some fair and fragile flower,
Fondly did we cherish her,
'Till death's chill and darksome hour.

Brightly, like a sunbeam rare,
Shone she in our home so sweet,
Darkly now the shadows fall,
With the passing of her feet.

MY DEAR SUNNY SOUTHLAND.

How dear to my heart is the fair, sunny South-
land,
With its flowers, its song birds, its bright hum-
ming bees,
With its clear, winding streams, its forests prime-
val,
Where the murmuring pine trees perfume all
the breeze,
How sweet is the springtime, and fair early sum-
mer,
When daisies and buttercups carpet the ground,
When odor of eglantine mingles with jasmine,
And the sweet-smelling clover is ev'rywhere
found.

My dear sunny Southland,
My fair, dreamy Southland,
My musical Southland,
What joys here abound.

How gorgeous the woods in their autumnal splendor,
How balmy the air, filled with scent of late flowers,
What glorious sunsets are seen at this season,
No sun ever set in more splendor than ours,
Fit home for the poet this land so romantic,
Ah, what so inspiring as beauty is found?
The sigh of the South wind, the breath of the flowers,
There is poetry, music in each sight and sound.
My dear sunny Southland,
My fair, dreamy Southland,
My musical Southland,
What joys here abound.

THOU ART SLEEPING.

Thou art sleeping, thou art sleeping,
In the cold and silent tomb,
Where the nightly dew is steeping
Flowers that o'er thy slumber bloom,

Nevermore shall care oppress thee,
Never shall thy heart be stirred
By old mem'ries that distress thee,
Vanished joys, and hope deferred.

Thou art sleeping, thou art sleeping,
Deep beneath the cumbrous sod,
Where the lov'd ones o'er thee weeping
Waft their souls in prayer to God.
Calm is now thy troubled spirit,
Now thy weary feet may rest,
Purest joy may'st thou inherit,
With the ransomed and the blest.

Thou art sleeping, thou art sleeping,
On the green earth's quiet breast,
Where the stars are nightly keeping
Holy vigils o'er thy rest.
All life's sorrows now are ended,
All its toil and strife are o'er;
May thy spirit be attended
By bright angels evermore.

THE GRIPPE.

Parody on "The Bells."

See the people with the grippe,
Hateful grippe!

How the doctor comes and goes,
On his repeated trip.
Hear them sneezing, sneezing, sneezing,
Thro' the day and thro' the night,
While there comes a dreadful wheezing,
That keeps up its constant teasing
Till their chests are sore and tight.
How they hack, hack, hack,
With a pain in head and back,
Making wild expostulations,
As their medicine they sip.
To the grippe, grippe, grippe, grippe,
Grippe, grippe, grippe,
To the racking and the hacking,
Of the grippe.

See the children with the grippe,
Spiteful grippe!
What a world of doleful sobbing,
As they feel the nip!
On the silent air of night,
How they yell out their affright,
Like fierce tempestuous gales,
All in tune.
What a fearful noise assails
The poor mother as she listens,
While she hails
Death a boon.

Oh! from thro' the open doors,
What a gust of shrieks and screams
Voluminously pours!
How they sip, how they rip
With rage and pain.
What a flip they now must take,
What a dip,
To stop the aching and the breaking,
Of the grippe, grippe, grippe,
Of the grippe, grippe, grippe, grippe,
Grippe, grippe, grippe,
Stop the darting and the smarting
Of the grippe.

See the women with the grippe,
Dreadful grippe!
What a tale of terror is revealed
By eye and lip!
In the patient doctor's ear
How they pour out all their fear,
Too much terrified to sleep
They can only weep, weep
Out of tune.
In a clamourous appealing
For some relieving plaster.
With frantic exclamation,
They demand a mustard plaster,
Weeping faster, faster, faster,

Now the doctor, now the pastor,
They consult with hope and dread.
Tossing, tumbling on the bed,
Till overcome with fear they swoon,
Oh, the grippe, grippe, grippe.
How much physic they must sip
For relief!
How they mix and drink and scold,
How they try to cure this cold,
That has brought them so much agony,
And grief.
"Yet the heart it fully knows,
By the changes
And the ranges
How the danger ebbs and flows."
And the briny tears still drip
At the wearing and the tearing,
As the dangers rise and slip,
"At the sinking and the swelling
Of the anger" of the grippe.
Of the grippe, grippe, grippe, grippe,
Grippe, grippe, grippe,
Of the gnawing and sawing
Of the grippe.

See the men folks with the grippe,
Awful grippe!

What a world of fuss and fume
As they their glasses tip,
"In the silence of the night,
How we shiver with affright
At the melancholy menace of their tone.
For every sound that floats
From the rust within their throats
Is a groan."
And the demon, oh, the demon,
Recognized by man and woman,
In their brain,
And, who, beating, beating, beating,
With all his might and main
Feels a glory in so treating
These poor men with ache and pain.
He has neither heart nor feeling
And their senses he keeps stealing
Till they're gone.
And he hammers and he grinds,
And he winds, winds, winds,
Their brains up in the grippe,
And with merry hop and skip,
He tramples in the grippe,
Ever lashing with his whip,
Leaping high, high, high,
With a whoop and with a cry,
How he maddens them with grippe.
With the grippe,

Leaping high, high, high,
With black malice in his eye,
How he crazes them with grippe,
With the grippe, grippe, grippe,
How he dazes them with grippe,
Leaping high, high, high,
With a trip, trip, trip,
And a twinkle in his eye,
How he dances to the grippe,
To the grippe, grippe, grippe,
To the grinding of the grippe,
Of the grippe, grippe, grippe,
To the slashing and the smashing
Of the grippe.

IN GOD'S HANDS.

All things are in God's hands,
Life and death and joy and sorrow;
All things obey his high commands,
He fashions each to-morrow.
All things, however great or high,
All things, however small or low,
Are marked by his unslumb'ring eye,
As countless ages come and go.

Spirit omnipotent and infinite,
The mind of man can never fathom thine!
Thou rulest in thy glory and thy might,
And we must needs obey thy laws divine.

But, oh, thou art a King
Whose chiefest attribute is love;
Then will we all thy praises sing,
Angels chant them up above.
Through all the blinding pain that comes
Show us the purpose of thy grace,
Reveal thou through the darkest storms,
The shining glory of thy face,
As through a glass we now but darkly see,
And thy designs can only feebly trace;
But thou hast promised in eternity,
We shall see all things clearly "face to face."

Soon life's short race is run,
Gone by the evils that betide,
Beyond a new life is begun.
O, Heavenly Father, be our guide,
Direct us in the paths of right,
While here our wayward footsteps stray,
Increase our love. Let faith's pure light,
Shine as a star above our way.
When we at last have burst the bonds of time,
And rise to thy fair realms of fadeless light,
We'll, in the joyful peace of that bright clime,
Forget the dreary darkness of earth's night.

MY LOVE IS ALL AROUND THEE.

My love is all around thee,
A mystic, magic spell.
A flood of golden sunshine,
Wherein no dark may dwell.
Life's storms may gather round thee,
Heed not the tempest's roar,
My love will be the beacon
That guides thee safe to shore.

My love is all around thee;
No evil can come near,
Not all the powers of darkness,
In league could harm thee, dear.
Temptation's siren voices,
May call thee day and night,
My love will be the anchor,
That moors thee to the right.

My love is all around thee;
E'en in death's darksome hour,
'Twill shed its perfume o'er thee,
Like some sweet fadeless flower.
And by the crystal river,
More deathless than a star,
Love's flower will bloom immortal
When we have "crossed the bar."

IX.

THE MONSTROSITY.

By Gaston Pool.

Part I.

One morning in August, as I was sipping a glass of Hock to steady my nerves after a swell banquet at Delmonico's, the following telegram was handed me:

"Mobile, Ala., August 16, 1878.
To John Loring,
Manhattan Club,
New York City.
I am critically ill. Business of importance. Come at once. Arthur Boswell."

I read the message carefully, and arrived at this conclusion: The old gentleman, my scapegrace uncle, was about to die and leave me his fortune.

Arthur Boswell, my mother's uncle, had in '48, committed a felony. He fled from his home to escape the penalty of the law, and for two years led the life of a fugitive in the great Dismal Swamp.

About the year 1850, he went to Mobile. Here he had amassed, by precarious methods, a large fortune.

I had never seen my delectable granduncle, this degenerate scion of a noble stock, but had heard his history from my father.

You may be sure I had no wish to soothe the dying hours of my decrepit relative; but here was an opportunity not to be lost. I seized it by the forelock, and was the same day on my way to the beautiful city on the Gulf.

It was night when I arrived in Mobile, but a drive of twenty minutes brought me to my uncle's residence. A withered negro crone received me at the door, and showed me into a large room which opened on the hall from the right. The room was meanly furnished. The straggling remains of a straw matting clung to the floor in spots. The old, faded fustian curtains gave forth a heavy, musty odor; and the table, horse-hair sofa, and few chairs which completed the interior decorations, were rickety and wormeaten. A small kerosene lamp, whose dismal light struggled through a very dirty chimney, served to make the darkness visible.

The house (I discovered afterward) was old and dilapidated. It was two stories high and contained eight rooms. Two wide central passages—one above, the other below stairs—divided the mansion exactly into halves; and upon these halls the upper and lower rooms opened respectively. A spacious, old-fashioned porch, and a balcony above shaded by huge red cedars, afforded a cool retreat during the hot weather. The yard was large, and contained several outbuildings, all in a tumble-down condition.

When I had finished a very meager supper, the harridan conducted me to my uncle's apartment,

the second room to the left on the second floor. The wide, empty, resounding halls were involved in Cimmerian blackness. I could see nothing—could only follow the echoing footsteps of the hag.

When we reached the room the old woman muttered in my ear: "Don't be frightened. They won't hurt you;" and threw open the door.

I was instantly blinded—completely overwhelmed—by the flood of dazzling light which enveloped me. At the same moment a violent uproar smote upon my ears.

In two or three minutes my eyes became accustomed to the light, and I advanced into the room.

The walls were done in azure with gold trimmings, and hung with a few fine oil paintings. The furniture was upholstered in blue and gold—an arabesque design on a blue ground—to match the walls and ceiling. Persian and Turkish rugs were scattered about the floor, which was waxed over a hard oil finish. The curtains of blue and gold brocade were artistically draped about the tall windows. Blue and gold prevailed in the tone of the bed-hangings, the easy-chairs, and a Japanese lacquered table which stood near the center of the room. A powerful arc lamp, of four hundred candle-power, depended from the ceiling, and glared with burly brightness through the apartment.

The old man was reclining on a small Turkish divan, rich with Oriental embroideries. His two dogs lay crouched beside him on the skin of some wild jungle beast, snarling and growling fearfully.

One was a bulldog of enormous size, deep-mouthed, wide-chested and tawny. The bristles of his neck, now standing erect in his angry trans-

port, were long, thick and shaggy, and resembled the mane of an African lion. His bloodshot eyes gleamed with a lurid fire; his tail oscillated with repressed rage; his terrible fangs gnashed threateningly. The other was a pure-bred bloodhound, not so fierce; but there was that in his determined aspect, his deeply-divided nostrils, his hanging jaws and his somber glance which might well terrify the bravest. Heavy steel collars, to which were attached strong chains, encircled the necks of these formidable body-guards. These chains their master held in his hands, and restrained by word and gesture their impatience at my intrusion.

The owner of the dogs, reposing nonchalantly on the Turkish divan, was a tall, spare man, whose age it would be difficult to determine. Over his angular jaws and sharp chin the sallow skin was tightly drawn, but his forehead was embossed with numberless wrinkles. His iron-gray hair, of which he had an abundance, was close-cut behind and brushed up in the pompadour style. His pale, gray eyes looked out under heavy brows. He was clean-shaven, and a chronic sneer lurked in the lines about his mouth. His hands were delicate and well-kept, and his feet gracefully modeled. He wore a black China silk dressing-gown, embroidered with yellow chrysanthemums, a low-cut white silk vest, black pantaloons, white tie and diamond-studs. Turkish slippers and a scarlet fez completed his costume and revealed his Oriental tastes.

"So you are my nephew, John Loring?" said my uncle, in a high, thin voice. "Heaven knows I am glad to see you. This seems a strange recep-

tion, I know, but you must make allowances, my dear sir—you must make allowances for the vagaries of an old man. These dogs are the best friends I have in the world. They love me, they fear me, they protect me. And I return their affection. Am I not right, sir?"

I replied that nothing could be more natural.

"Cerberus sleeps in this room, and Argus in the hall below. Oh, you'll soon get acquainted with them," laughed the old man. "Throw a sop to Cerberus, and you'll easily propitiate him. He differs from his Plutonic prototype in having but one head, but his reasoning powers are much better developed than were those of the triple-headed guardian of Pluto's dominions. He knows his friends and mine. In a little while he will recognize you as a kinsman. Observe his frontal development, his corrugated brow, the seat of the reason, and his intellectual expression.

"I told you I had business of importance to communicate—and I have. But to-morrow I will explain myself. You are tired. I will ring for Sarah to show you to your room," and he touched an electric bell.

By this time the dogs had become reconciled to my presence in the room, and had ceased their hostile demonstrations. Taking advantage of their quiescence, my uncle dropped the chains he had been holding, rose from the sofa, and advanced with stately, though feeble steps to shake hands with me before I retired.

As his nervous hand closed on mine in cordial grasp—the first opportunity we had had of exchanging this courtesy—his hard lips relaxed in

a genial smile. I saw I had made a favorable impression.

"Can I do anything for you before retiring?" I said.

"Nothing, thank you. Sarah and the dogs will take care of me. I shall let you know when you can be of service.

"We must mend our fare, Sarah—and give him the best bed-chamber. Remember that my nephew, John, is the darling of the New York clubs, and we must do what we can to make him comfortable.

"Come to me at ten in the morning," he said, addressing me.

I promised to be promptly on hand, and we parted for the night.

Sarah led the way across the hall to the room opposite my uncle's. It was large, airy, and plainly but comfortably furnished.

When I was left alone, I lighted a cigar, and drawing a willow rocker close to the window began to speculate upon my uncle's eccentricities. I had not been long seated when I heard the door opposite my own open. This was immediately followed by the bounding of the two dogs in the passage, and my uncle's voice saying:

"Cerberus! Argus! Do your duty."

Then they went down the stairs in great leaps. Sarah let them out at the front door, and they proceeded to inspect the premises. They soon returned, but when admitted into the house, one remained below to guard the front door, while the other took his place at the bedside of his master. I learned afterward that this nightly inspection was

never omitted. The next morning at ten o'clock sharp, I presented myself in my uncle's apartments.

He received me graciously, saying:

"Good morning, John. I hope you slept well. I had rather a bad night. The pain in my kidneys troubled me a good deal."

I told him I had slept the sweet sleep of the innocent, and expressed concern at his physical condition.

"Yes, I am likely to die any day. I have already lasted longer than my physicians thought possible. I have to be kept under the influence of narcotics nearly all the time. I am going to die, John—and soon, very soon. I am haunted at night by hideous specters. Grim monsters from the nether world leer at me from the wall. They whisper, they giggle, they make the most horrible grimaces. Sometimes they beckon me to join in their infernal games—sometimes hurl terrible curses at my defenseless head."

While describing his hallucinations the poor man worked himself up to a fearful pitch of excitement. It was painful to see the twitching of his mouth and eyelids, his weak tremblings, and his ghastly pallor. I now understood why he kept that brilliant light burning all night in his room.

I hastily mixed a glass of brandy and water, which revived him greatly, and he was soon himself again. I insisted that the goblins who haunted his couch were mere delusions of the imagination —freaks of an overwrought fancy, superinduced by the opiates he took.

He listened to my arguments with attention,

but made no reply. I think, however, they afforded him some comfort.

I began to assiduously cultivate the acquaintance of Cerberus and Argus. I not only "threw a sop to Cerberus" in the form of a mutton chop, but likewise one to Argus, to prevent any jealousy on his part. In a few days we had become fast friends.

One day my uncle said: "John, let's talk business. I sent for you to take charge of my affairs. I can get nobody whom I can trust. I have been worried to death by incompetent and untrustworthy agents. You are my relative—I have no friends except my dogs; and I shall make you my heir. I want you to learn matters of business. I want you to learn to make money and keep it. My estate is large, and requires management. I want to leave it in good hands. You must take care of it and build it up. You have a lifetime before you. In thirty years, by judicious handling, you may make it rival Astor's or Vanderbilt's."

I thanked him warmly for his kind intentions, and promised obedience to his wishes.

All that day we looked over books and papers; notes, mortgages, stocks, bonds and rent rolls. The next day I went to work in earnest, and was surprised to find that I rather enjoyed it. In two weeks I had collected more than ten thousand dollars, and the old man was greatly pleased with my exertions. For three months I worked hard—devoting myself exclusively to business. At the end of that time I was as familiar with my uncle's af-

fairs as he was himself, and had completely gained his confidence.

These three months had dragged Arthur Boswell rapidly towards the grave. He already looked like a dead man; but I had done my duty, and had nothing with which to reproach myself.

One morning, towards the latter part of November, I took Uncle Arthur for a drive. It was one of those bright, mild days so often seen in the Indian summer of the South; but the sick man shivered as with internal cold. Still he talked cheerfully, and seemed in unusually good spirits. When we were passing the cemetery he bade me drive in.

"I want to show you my tomb," said he.

I wondered what he meant, but said nothing.

He directed me where to stop, and I assisted him to alight.

Within a neat iron railing was a white marble edifice, built in imitation of a Hindoo temple. This exquisite tomb enclosed two massive marble sarcophagi of ornate design. One of these held the remains of his only brother, the other was destined for his own resting place. A Smyrna carpet covered the floor, oil paintings adorned the walls, and statues of heathen goddesses were ranged on either side of the sarcophagi.

While I gazed in wonder and admiration on the beautiful mausoleum, my uncle smiled complacently, and asked me if I could imagine anything more enchanting.

I heaped the highest encomiums on the skill and taste displayed by the architect who conceived and executed this *chef-dœuvre* in monumental

marble. The old gentleman seemed highly delighted at my enthusiasm, and himself delivered a panegyric on the beauties of his *templum de marmore.*

"The knowledge that my dust shall be consigned to imperishable marble, and roofed over by this temple of ideal beauty, almost reconciles me to the thought of death," he said.

Three days after this visit to the cemetery, Arthur Boswell died. By the provisions of his will, Cerberus and Argus were each granted an annuity of two hundred dollars during their lives. Excepting these annuities, and small bequests to his two servants, I was the sole legatee.

Part II.

I now found myself in possession of property valued at three million dollars. Strange as it may seem, now that I was a wealthy man, I had no desire to return to my old, idle, aimless life. My views had changed. I had imbibed some of my uncle's ideas, and was now fired with an ambition to swell my fortune to vast proportions. During my short apprenticeship in the care of my uncle's affairs, I had developed a genius for business which surprised me. I found an active, bustling life much more agreeable than lounging in club-rooms, or dawdling at "five o'clock teas." My health was fine, and I was ready to begin the struggle for more millions. After clearing off my debts I settled down to work in Mobile. I had the old house thoroughly repaired, repainted, and refurnished, and decided upon my uncle's room as my

sleeping apartment—it being the pleasantest and best appointed room in the house. Sarah and Aaron, Uncle Arthur's old servants, remained with me; the dogs occupied their old quarters; and I felt happy in the new possession of my renovated bachelor's domicile.

I spent three weeks in New York, on business, and on my return occupied my new room for the first time. I was well pleased with the improvements throughout the house (which had been completed during my absence), but was particularly delighted with my new bedchamber. Here nothing was changed—except that I had had a twenty-four candle-power incandescent globe substituted for the powerful arc lamp. The dogs evinced almost human grief at Uncle Arthur's death, but they fawned upon me to-night with evident delight at my return, and seemed to recognize me as their new master. I let them out at ten o'clock for their nightly inspection, and then Cerberus returned to his post of duty. I was smoking a Cubana, and looking over an evening paper, when the light suddenly went out. I attributed the circumstance to an abrupt break in the electric current, through something amiss with the machinery of the plant, and waited a few minutes to see if the light would reappear. In the meantime I noticed, by the light of the fire, that Cerberus sat upon his haunches about two yards distant, growling sullenly. He was looking towards the middle of the room, and a vague fear dwelt in his eyes. I called him twice before he came to my side, and even then he kept his eyes fixed on the same spot, and never ceased his low growling.

I spoke to him soothingly, but he paid no attention. What could be the matter? To see this ferocious dog, the Ajax of his race, quail at a shadow, was inexplicable.

Becoming impatient to resume my reading, I stepped under the lamp to see what was wrong with it. As I did so a wave of cold air came from the direction of the door, as if it had been opened and shut noiselessly. I tried the stopcock, and was surprised to find that the light had been turned off by something or somebody in the room. As the light again flashed through the apartment Cerberus sprang towards the door, barking furiously. I rushed downstairs in pursuit of what I took to be a sneak thief, who had somehow gained an entrance to the room without my knowledge. But when I got as far as the front door I stopped to consider. There was Argus lying quietly before the door, and I knew the thief could not have escaped that way without a terrible struggle with the vigilant bloodhound.

Cerberus would not join the pursuit, but sulked at his post. So I took Argus, and we made a thorough search of the house and grounds, but could find no trace of the miscreant.

Returning disappointed to my room, I was soon absorbed in an article on the race problem.

I had been reading more than a quarter of an hour, when the light disappeared as suddenly and mysteriously as at first. Thinking to catch the marauder this time, I made a quick dash towards the lamp, but my outstretched hands grasped only empty air, and I heard a mocking laugh, as if at my discomfiture. The situation was be-

coming interesting. My uncle's ghosts were evidently taking liberties with me. It was plain that I could not depend on Cerberus as an ally against spirits and demons, for he was crouched behind the stove uttering lugubrious growls.

Being naturally fearless and even reckless in disposition, I felt no alarm at what appeared to be a supernatural manifestation. But the conduct of Cerberus filled me with astonishment. In a little while, however, his courage returned, and he seemed to feel ashamed of his former cowardice.

As the ghost seemed to object to a light, I concluded to go to bed in the dark. I put a 38-caliber revolver under my pillow, thinking I might have occasion to use it during the night, by way of amusing my quondam visitor. I soon fell into a sound sleep, which lasted until two o'clock in the morning. The moment my eyes opened I saw that a luminous haze filled the room. At the same time my olfactories were saluted with as foul a smell as ever emanated from a charnel house. The luminosity seemed not to proceed from a central focus, but generally to pervade the atmosphere. This chameleon-like vapor assumed varying tones of color; shifting from somber tints of amber and drab to hues gorgeous as the most brilliant Tyrian dyes: then changing again to that peculiar greenish glow which the lampyridæ emit in tropic latitudes, it finally settled into a pale, blue, sulphurous flame, which wreathed itself in forked tongues through the mist, and lapped it up with a hissing sound. The strong smell of brimstone, mingling with some heavier, subtler and more detestable odor, was nearly stifling me, and I started up to

open a window. Just as I raised myself to a sitting posture in bed, I happened to glance towards the stove, and I could feel my hair rise on end with horror at the ghastly spectacle I beheld.

Through the pale flicker of the noxious vapor, I saw, seated in my armchair before the fire, a thing so gross, so foul, so strange that my reason reeled and my circulation stopped. A creature in the likeness of a man, but with lineaments more hideous, and deformity more grotesque than fiend of hell or goblin damned. His limbs were gnarled and twisted like the branches of an oak, an enormous liver-colored wen crowned the top of his skull and gave him the appearance of having two heads. His lumbar vertebrae was elongated to an abnormal degree, so that he could not lean back in his chair. His attitude permitted me to see his deep-sunk, saurian eyes, his beetling brows, his cavernous jaws, his blubber lips and his protruding yellow fangs. His nondescript garments were old, tattered, and reeking with dank fumes, and his misshapen feet were encased in huge felt slippers.

Recovering somewhat from the shock I experienced at first sight of the apparition, I drew my revolver, leveled it at the head of the monster, and fired five times in rapid succession. When the smoke of battle cleared away, I looked eagerly for my adversary. He was nowhere to be seen. Cerberus was obstreperous in his demonstrations of joy, Sarah hurried in with a light, and two policemen quickly followed to learn the cause of the disturbance.

I knew they would not believe me if I told them the truth, so I lied, telling them I had been at-

tacked by a burglar. This statement satisfied the officers, and they went off in search of the supposed felon, but Sarah seemed much upest by the night's adventure.

Weeks elapsed, and though the picture of the monster was indelibly photographed on my retina, I had lost all apprehension of a return of his visits.

It was the 12th of January, 1879. I had concluded a heavy deal in cotton, and was jubilant at the prospect of gaining twenty per cent. To celebrate the day's transaction, I invited a few friends to dine with me. At seven o'clock the guests had all arrived. There was Jack Dawson, the bank clerk; Tom Harrigan, the funny man; Roland Bledsoe, President Chamber of Commerce; Charlie Loran, the local poet; James Duke, cotton merchant, and Hugh Redpath Abbottsfield, editor and orator.

We were seated around a large circular table in the banqueting hall, otherwise known as the dining-room. Silver and cut-glass sparkled on the board. The center piece was a floral dragon mounted on an epergne of chased oxidized silver. The menu was elaborate and the conviviality contagious. Toasts, bon-mots, jokes and songs were the order of the night.

"Here's to the health of our gracious host," said the cotton factor, rising, and holding up to the light his glass of Cliquot. "May his life be long, his love be true, and his wealth increase."

"And," added Tom Harrigan, "may his head never swell and his heart never shrink."

"Amen," quoth the company, rising to the toast,

and in a twinkling seven empty glasses struck the table with a clatter.

Fast and frantic grew the mirth, as the different wines circulated around the board and through the veins of the imbibers.

Charlie Loran gushed over with poetry. Tom Harrigan's frothy wit bubbled up like the sparkling champagne. Even the pompous and dignified Bledsoe became a maudlin sentimentalist. Twelve times boomed the brazen bell of the city clock, but it interrupted not the revelry.

"'Tis the witching hour of midnight," drawled Charlie Loran. "Look to yourself, Jack, when you venture out on the frozen boulevards of this tropic city."

"You are drunk, Charlie Loran, beastly drunk. I repudiate the insinuation with scorn," roared Jack Dawson. And then he broke out with the following Bacchanalian ditty:

"When you kiss a pretty girl,
And she goes and tells her mother,
When you kiss a pretty girl,
And she goes and tells her mother,
May she live to be an old maid,
May she live to be an old maid,
May she live to be an old maid,
And never get another.

CHORUS.

"Landlord, fill the flowing bowl,
Until it does run over,
Landlord, fill the flowing bowl,
Until it does run over,

For to-night we'll merry, merry be,
For to-night we'll merry, merry be,
For to-night we'll merry, merry be,
And to-morrow we'll get sober."

The orgy reached its height. Jack Dawson was in the middle of his song, when he stopped as suddenly as if he had been shot. His jaw dropped, his cheek blanched, and a look of horror grew on his face.

"What's the matter, Jack? Have you got the snakes?" called out the Hon. Redpath Abbottsfield.

"Perhaps he sees a spirit to-night. What wonder they have got into his imagination."

The object of their gibes answered not, but stared with dull and glassy eyes over the head of his *vis-a-vis.*

Curiosity, or the vague apprehension begotten of another's fear, prompted the company with one accord, to turn their looks in the direction taken by the fixed and baleful gaze of the horrified bank-teller. And had the head of the fabled gorgon appeared in our midst it could not have created greater consternation. With bristling hair, frozen eyes, and rigid muscles, their countenances seemed really hardened into stone. For there, in the room, within ten feet of us, stood the nameless horror who had visited me on that memorable night when I first slept in my uncle's chamber. In the bright, mellow light diffused by the wax candles, the frightful form of the monster appeared with hideous distinctness. His ophidian glance traveled around the board. He advanced. He extended

his right hand, clasping a glittering tube. A volatile gas escaped. The lights grew dim and blurred. The fiend laughed.

It was then that I recovered the power of speech, and mustering my courage, thus addressed the goblin:

"Are you vampire, spirit, ghoul or demon? and what is your commission upon earth? Speak! though your voice be terrible as the belching of Vesuvius."

"I am thy father's spirit. Doomed for a certain time to walk the night; and, for the day, confined to fast in fires, till the foul crimes, done in my days of nature, are burnt and purged away," replied the spirit, in a harsh and rumbling voice.

A silence of some minutes followed this declamation, during which the specter seemed buried in thought. At last he broke the silence with these words:

"Sir Knights of the Round Table, your deeds of valor and chivalry have been the theme of the poet and the minstrel for a thousand years; but you did not know the great Shakespeare—Francis Bacon, some called him. He was the greatest man who ever lived execept Dan Rice. The convolutions of Dan's brain enclosed nuggets of wit as large as hen's eggs. His shining ability as a contortionist made him world-famous—and he ate himself up with chopsticks.

"Ah, there is my cousin, King Arthur," he continued, looking at me. "Strange, I have just observed him. But he is looking remarkably well.

"Gentlemen, behold in me the uncouth offspring of a criminal father.

"Here, judge if hell, with all its power to damn, can add one curse to the foul thing I am.

"This vile and loathsome husk, fouler than Frankenstein's demon or the Veiled Prophet of Khorassan, masks the soul of a poet and the genius of a scientist. I have delved in the profundities of the earth. I have been the disciple of Cagliostro; and have mastered the secrets of esoteric chemistry."

So saying, he took from an inside pocket a small box containing a powder, which he sprinkled on the floor. Then walking, or rather gliding (for, notwithstanding his misshapen feet his movements were singularly lithe and stealthy) in a circle around the powder, he muttered some mystic incantation. In a moment a lambent flame sprang into being. It rose from the carpet. It floated above our heads. It was of the color of blood. Its erubescence ruddied the upturned features of the guests.

"You look with terror on that gory flame," said the harsh and hollow voice of the demon. "Think what the lake of perdition must be, and I—

"'*My hour is almost come,*
When I to sulphurous and tormenting flames
Must render up myself.'"

Saying which, he threw some subtle fluid on the flame, that instantly dissolved it in a crimson shower.

The nervous tension was too great for human endurance. Syncope intervened, and when I recovered consciousness I was alone. An open win-

dow near at hand, revealed the manner of egress of my guests. They had taken French leave. I followed their example and leaped from the window. I slept at the Gulf House that night.

The next morning I sent word to Sarah that I should for the present, take up my quarters at the hotel. She asked for an interview, saying she had important communications to make. Her request being granted, she told the following story, in a dialect which I shall translate:

Twenty-six years previous to the date of this narrative, Arthur Boswell had formed a liaison with a deformed Creole, for whom he had contracted a strange passion. The unhappy offspring of this illicit union was (as might have been expected in some degree) a prodigious malformation of nature. A being so distorted as scarcely to bear a semblance to the human species. In proportion as the father hated, reviled and condemned him, the mother lavished upon the child of sin the treasures of maternal affection. At the age of ten the child was well advanced in his studies, under the direction of a private tutor, whom his father grudgingly allowed. As is frequently the case in the compensations of nature, the deformed body was endowed with a most precocious mind. His vigorous intellect greedily absorbed the elements of knowledge, and he often elicited the admiration of his tutor by evidences of a superior mental and moral nature. About this time that malignant scourge, yellow fever, claimed for its victim the only friend he had—his mother. Received into his father's house, not from the natural sentiments of love or pity, but from the fear

that the secret of his birth might otherwise be discovered, he was kept in the most rigid confinement; being concealed in the attic from all eyes, save those of his tutor, who daily visited him, and Sarah, to whose care he was confided.

The boy grew to be a man. His life had been devoted to the cultivation of his mind. His erudition was profound. He had mastered the lore of the sages of old. He was deeply versed in literature. He had cultivated the mystic sciences, and he was particularly addicted to experimental chemistry. The poor creature's fondness for Sarah, the only person (except his tutor) who showed him kindness, was touching, and she learned to love him in return. The sweet temper, the docile manners, the pitiable condition of this being, cursed and blighted from his birth, won from the good old negress sincere sympathy and genuine affection.

As he grew older his mind became morbid; his long confinement quelled his spirit and quenched the ardor of his youth. His father's hatred was agony to him; he felt his intellectual superiority, yet was denied the privilege of associating with his fellow man. His maimed and horrible physique was a terror to himself. He was outcast of mankind. He brooded over a thousand wrongs, real and imaginary. He railed at the injustice of God and man.

Gradually, as the years rolled on, madness fastened upon his brain, and he had been for two years hopelessly insane.

Shortly before his death, my uncle had informed Sarah of his intention of disinheriting his natural son, and making me his heir.

Being unwilling to confess to me his terrible secret he had confided to his old and valued servant the sole charge of her *protégé,* bequeathing her a considerable legacy in consequence. Recent events had alarmed Sarah for the safety of her charge, and her conscience urged her, on my account as well as his, to make me her confidant—hence the foregoing revelations.

The reader will doubtless have guessed the identity of the goblin. The unfortunate son of Uncle Arthur was removed, by my directions, to a private asylum, where I knew he would receive every attention from the humane management. I visited him often, and in his lucid intervals found him a delightful conversationalist. His was as strange a case as was that of the famous Elephant-man, the sight of whom made women faint and men turn sick.

He died young, being spared the pain of lingering in a world where he would always have been regarded with disgust and horror.

Some further explanations regarding the mysterious occurrences related in this history may be necessary, and I give them as far as I am able.

It has already been said that the movements of the monster were singularly noiseless and stealthy, and this peculiarity, considered together with the facility for concealing himself in the attic (which was never searched), may account for his sudden and mysterious appearance and disappearance. The almost supernatural dread evinced by Cerberus for the son of his master, can only be accounted for on the ground that his brute instinct recognized in the madman an implacable enemy (the maniac

hated the dog); and who shall say but that his canine soul quailed with a pseudo-human fear at the uncanny attributes of the strange apparition.

As to the creation of the magic and gory flame I can offer no solution, unless it be that the savant had discovered the secret in the course of his learned researches in esoteric science, or had accidentally hit upon it in his scientific experiments.

It may be asked how the maniac escaped death at my hands on the night when I fired five shots at him. I think that is easily explained. Being half dead with fright, my aim must have been very unsteady, and the shots consequently fell wide of the mark.

With these explanations, such as they are, I close this tale. I do not ask the reader to accept them, but to form his own conclusions from the facts herein set forth.

THE END.

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